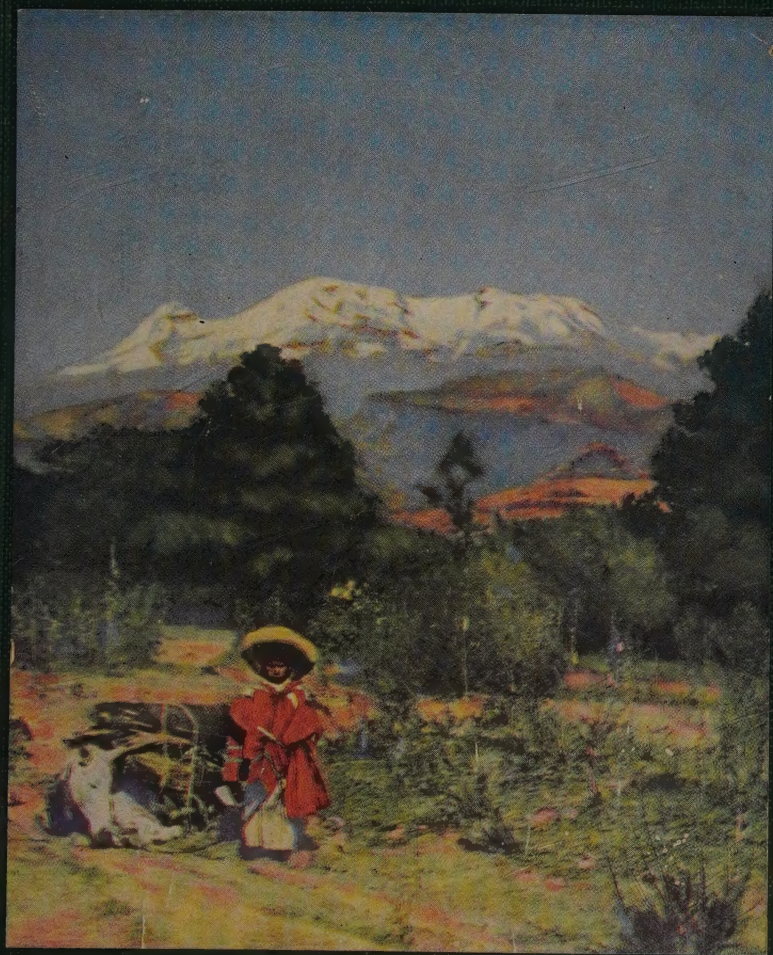


# BEAUTIFUL MEXICO



VERNON QUINN

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BEAUTIFUL MEXICO









*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

THE LAND OF COLOR AND CHARM  
Across the golden sands and the mist-blue mesas  
are the peaks of perpetual snow.

# BEAUTIFUL MEXICO

ITS STORY, LEGENDS, AND  
SCENIC CHARM

BY

VERNON QUINN

*Author of "Beautiful America"*

WITH THIRTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS  
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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To  
CARSON QUINN





## FOREWORD

**M**EXICO'S delightful climate, her picturesque mountain and jungle scenery, the quaintness and charm of the Indians who cling to the old customs and costumes, lure thousands of visitors into the country. And after a week, or a month, or a year, these visitors return to their homes steeped in the romance and beauty of this land of many charms. Yet, in spite of that, the real Mexico remains today virtually unknown to the outside world. The vast majority of Americans have an entirely erroneous impression, due almost wholly to lack of information as to the country and its people.

Books on Mexico that appear from time to time usually are devoted to political controversy, or else they are text-book history; these, while scholarly and excellent for their purpose, do not interest the ordinary man. Hence he reads little on Mexico and remains with scant information and even less interest.

But Mexico is a fascinating land, and her story is redolent of romance and charm and red-blooded action. That story is told here, not alone for the scholar, not alone for the man with large business interests, but more especially for the general reader,

that Americans may have a broad and friendly understanding of the sister-republic, based on a fuller knowledge of present-day Mexico and of events of the past that have led up to it.

The aim of the book is to emphasize not the war-torn country that unfortunately Mexico often has been, but her lovelier side—the beauty of her scenery, from her riotous tropical jungles to her mountains perpetually covered with snow, from her cacti-sprinkled deserts to her glorious waterfalls and high mountain lakes; to present the quaint and charming legends of those ancient races whose spirit even yet permeates the land and whose ruins today are amazing evidences of their culture; to give an idea of the present-day Indians and their unusual and often delightful customs; and to tell the story of Mexico from the earliest prehistoric days to the present time.

While every statement is historically accurate, and nothing of importance in Mexico's entire story has been omitted, yet this book is not a history.

It is a story, told with a simplicity of language and a richness of incident that make it readable as well as informative. The text is interspersed with Indian legends, with stories of unique images of the Virgin greatly venerated throughout Mexico, of strange religious shrines and alleged miracles, and with descriptions of Mexico's rugged, often bizarre, and always beautiful scenery.

## FOREWORD

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Much of the historical data was secured through delving into the archives of the *Biblioteca nacional* and the *Museo nacional*, Mexico City, and the *Biblioteca publica*, Vera Cruz; and the author wishes to express appreciation of the unfailing courtesy of the librarians in these institutions, and their valuable suggestions. To the Mexican Consul General in New York, the Mexican Chamber of Commerce, and the National Railways of Mexico, thanks are due for many of the beautiful photographs used in the book. In all of the research work, whether for historical information or for distinctive photographs, the author met always with that spirit of courteous consideration and genuine helpfulness that is truly characteristic of the Mexican, whether at home or abroad.

The thirty-nine photographs have been chosen carefully from among many hundreds, in an effort to have them representative of all parts of the country, and to present those that best portray the interest and charm and the varied scenery of Beautiful Mexico.

New York,  
July, 1924





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# I. MEXICO THE BEAUTIFUL

MOUNTAINOUS MEXICO  
THE BARRANCA DE COBRE  
CLIFF-DWELLINGS IN SEPTENTRION CAÑON  
CACTUS FORESTS OF THE SOUTH  
POPOCATÉPETL, "THE MOUNTAIN THAT SMOKES"  
IXTACCÍHUATL, "THE WHITE WOMAN"  
PROUD MALINCHE  
EL PICO DE ORIZABA  
COLIMA AND THE CONJURED JORULLO  
JUNGLES OF THE TROPICS  
RIVERLESS YUCATAN  
THE FALLS OF JUANACATLÁN  
LAKE CHAPALA  
BEAUTIFUL PÁTZCUARO  
THE DESERTS OF THE NORTH  
BAJA CALIFORNIA





AN OUTLINE MAP OF MEXICO

# BEAUTIFUL MEXICO

## I

### MEXICO THE BEAUTIFUL

**F**EW countries have such a variety of scenery as has Mexico, the land of contrasts and exquisite color. There are mountain peaks perpetually covered with snow; there are smoking volcanoes; there are magnificent waterfalls and wild canyons. In some regions whole mountains are blue-black with forests of pine and juniper; in other regions the mountains stand naked and bare, golden brown in the sun, or covered with the tall, straight spikes of the organ-cactus, or spires of the ragged yucca.

In delightful contrast to the snow-summits and the mountains whose peaks are lost in the clouds, are the low tropical jungles that fringe the coast. Here nature displays herself in a riotous profusion of color. Bright flowers, bright-plumaged birds and gaudy butterflies are no more gay than the yellow-gold of the sun-splashed sands. Palm-trees etch ragged blue-black shadows; bright-green lizards flash; and everywhere brilliant magenta morning-glories claim the world for

their own. Truly Mexico is a land of color and of unending charm.

Old Mexico, primitive and quaint in the extreme, is giving way slowly to new Mexico with modern ideas and modern methods; but there are still immense districts, in out-of-the-way places, where the inhabitants live today much as did their ancestors two or more thousand years ago. And in all the land, however progressive it may become, the centuries-old traditions will not be forgotten, the monuments of its earliest peoples will not be erased: the glamour and the gripping charm of Old Mexico will remain.

The great variety of scenery is due to the conformation of the land. Extending along the entire eastern and western coasts, from north to south, there is a low tropical strip known as the *tierra caliente*, or hot land; this low country as it leaves the sea swells gradually, in places abruptly, into foothills, the *tierra templada*; and the temperate region then rises in precipitous terraces to the high central zone, the *tierra fria*, or cold land. This is a vast plateau extending, brokenly, the full length of the country and shut in on both sides by high mountain peaks of the many separate ranges that go to make up the Sierra Madre, which forms the connecting link between the Rocky Mountains and the Andes. In the south this plateau is not more than seven hundred feet high, in central Mexico it reaches more than eight thousand feet, and

in the north it descends to from three to four thousand feet. The mountains that edge the plateau rise from one to ten thousand feet higher.

Mexico's mountainous scenery is wild and beautiful. On the Pacific slope the cordillera is cut by many deep valleys, "pleasant water courses," running east and west and opening out directly onto the sea. The precipitous sides of the mountains guarding the valleys are themselves gashed by deep arroyos, sometimes mere dry gullies, often glorious cascades where the water rushes down from the sierras and falls tumultuously over the cliffs in its haste to reach the sea. In the northern mountains there are superb canyons, worn deep by rushing rivers, where the scenery is magnificent.

The Barranca de Cobre—Copper Gorge—in Chihuahua, is from four thousand to five thousand feet deep and extends for more than a hundred miles through some of the wildest of the Sierra Madre country. Far down, in the depths of the gorge, fringing the Rio Urique and protected from the cold of the mountain-tops, there is a riot of tropical vegetation, colorful and luxuriant, a tangled profusion of gay-blossomed trees and gaudy flowers. Higher, the copper-bearing cliffs are painted by nature in vivid tones of bronze, blue, ocher and green. For sheer grandeur and superb coloring this Barranca de Cobre has no equal in Mexico.

The Septentrion Cañon, about a hundred miles southwest of the Barranca de Cobre, is among the foothills of the sierras, and so has a wealth of subtropical vegetation. And added to its wild beauty there is a further interest; for perched on the sides of the canyon are ruins of prehistoric cliff-dwellings. A glamour of mystery hovers about these relics of a race that once lingered here, and left behind it not only the artificial caves and stone-and-adobe dwellings but its tribal records in the form of pictographs painted on the canyon walls.

The tortuous Barranca de San Carlos, four thousand feet deep, also has ruins of ancient cliff-dwellings. The caves, many of them artificial, are in a vertical cliff nearly three hundred feet above the river at the bottom of the gorge. Artificial ledges are cut here and there in the cliff, and in the remote past tree-ladders no doubt enabled the eerie dwellers to go below to cultivate their squash-patches or their maize-fields, to hunt their game or to fish in the river. The Indians of today fish here in perhaps the same primitive way employed by the prehistoric cliff-dwellers. They gather a species of poisonous cactus, pound off its prickly spines, then throw it into the river and jump upon it, tramping out the juice as Italians tramp their grapes. The poison thus released stupefies the fish and as they come floating to the surface they are easily gathered in. But a native will never go into the water to do



the tramping unless there is some one on shore to throw a heated stone into the river at frequent intervals to frighten off the terrible and mythical Water-serpent.

Travelers by rail from Tampico to San Luis Potosí delight in the wild beauty of the Tamasopa Cañon. With luxuriant abandon nature runs riotously over this gorge, leaving the luscious green of the jungle aglow with flaming flowers. The intoxicating perfume of cape jasmine mingles with the heavy incense of wild gardenias. Orchids are everywhere; and brilliant tropical birds and butterflies add a scintillant glory to this truly wild, color-splashed canyon.

On the route between Vera Cruz and Mexico City are the Barranca de Metlac—the hillsides, overrun with tangled vegetation, dropping abruptly to a limpid river—and the Barranca del Infiernillo, rugged and beautiful. Far down between the rocky walls of Infiernillo, a crystal stream tumbles over boulders in its path or stops to linger in enchanting spots, forming pools that reflect the beauty of leaning ferns and rocks dripping morning-glories. Wild and rugged this canyon is, and beautiful; yet its name means Little Hell.

The barrancas along the route of the railroad are those that are best known; but the truly superb gorges, four thousand to five thousand feet deep, lie in the fastnesses of the mountains. In all parts of the Sierra Madre there are canyons magnificent in their rugged-



ness, awe-inspiring in their tremendous heights, and surpassingly lovely in their colorful setting.

So unfrequented are many parts of the mountains and highlands and the lowland jungles that wild animals roam them unafraid, and birds find in them a safe refuge. The snow-goose of northern Canada wings its way to Mexico to winter; the brilliant cockatoo comes up from the steaming jungles of Panama to find a summer ground. In the remote haunts all creatures feel safe. Black and grizzly bears, wolves, tigers, lynxes, deer and many other animals are plentiful in the forested mountains; the lagoon-fringed shores abound in game; while wild-turkeys seem to thrive wherever there is a tree to roost in. They are abundant from the highest sierras of the north to the sandy plains of Yucatan, the Maya name of which meant "Land of the Turkey and the Deer."

The mountains of northern and central Mexico are magnificent; and those of the south are no less superb, although they are not so high. They twist and tumble and pile upon one another in endless confusion, with deep, narrow canyons between. In the rainy season a tiny rivulet threading its way through the bottom of the canyon increases in volume until it becomes a roaring torrent; and when the rain ceases and the dry months arrive it dwindles and often entirely disappears, leaving behind it a bed of boulders and water-smoothed pebbles. Many of the southern mountains

are heavily timbered; many are bare except for sun-loving cacti. The organ-cactus grows to a height of fifty feet or more. A hillside or a mountain covered with these strange trees is a spectacular sight, reminiscent of ogres and giants of fairy-lore. Often there are whole forests of nothing but cactus-trees, and the effect is surprisingly weird and wholly bizarre.

Added to the beauty of Mexico's mountains, there is a fascination in the knowledge that, from one end of the country to the other, they are vast storehouses of minerals, only a small percentage of which has yet been touched; for Mexico is still today, as it was in Humboldt's time, "the treasure-house of the world."

The most noted of Mexico's volcanic peaks are the ones which the ancient Indians worshiped and feared and the present-day Indian still regards with the utmost superstition.

Popocatépetl, Aztec for "The Mountain that Smokes," was believed to be the home of the gods, especially of the Fire-god and the Earth-monster who, because the clouds ever hover about the volcano's summit, were in direct communication with the Sky-gods. According to Aztec legends, both Popocatépetl and the nearby Ixtaccíhuatl were formed when the Fire-god and the Earth-monster, down in the Underworld, began to dispute about which was the stronger. The Earth-monster showed its power by pushing up the earth in a gigantic upheaval; but the Fire-god then

blew fire and molten rock even higher. Not to be outdone, the Earth-monster heaved again, and the hill became a mountain; but once more the fire ascended higher; and so through the centuries the volcano grew and grew, for never could this dispute be settled between the Fire-god and the Earth-monster.

Popocatépetl, about forty miles southeast of Mexico City, is 17,888 feet high, and its irregular summit is crowned with snow and fringed with glaciers. Its lower slopes are heavily forested; higher the trees are more straggling and give way to alpine meadows abloom with wild-flowers. Even far beyond the timberline flowers flaunt their bright blossoms between patches of snow, finding root-nourishment in the lava ash. The crater of Popo, as it is affectionately called in Mexico, is rich in sulphur, which has been mined here since the days when Cortés used it for the manufacture of gunpowder. Many thousands of tons have been taken out since then, but the supply seems inexhaustible. Popo remains quiescent for long periods of time; but underground disturbances go on constantly, and sulphur fumes and steam pour through rents in the floor and walls of the crater. As recently as the end of 1921 the Fire-god and the Earth-monster seemed to have renewed their ancient quarrel, for Popo then sent out great quantities of dense smoke and sulphuric gases that rolled upward in clouds and ascended

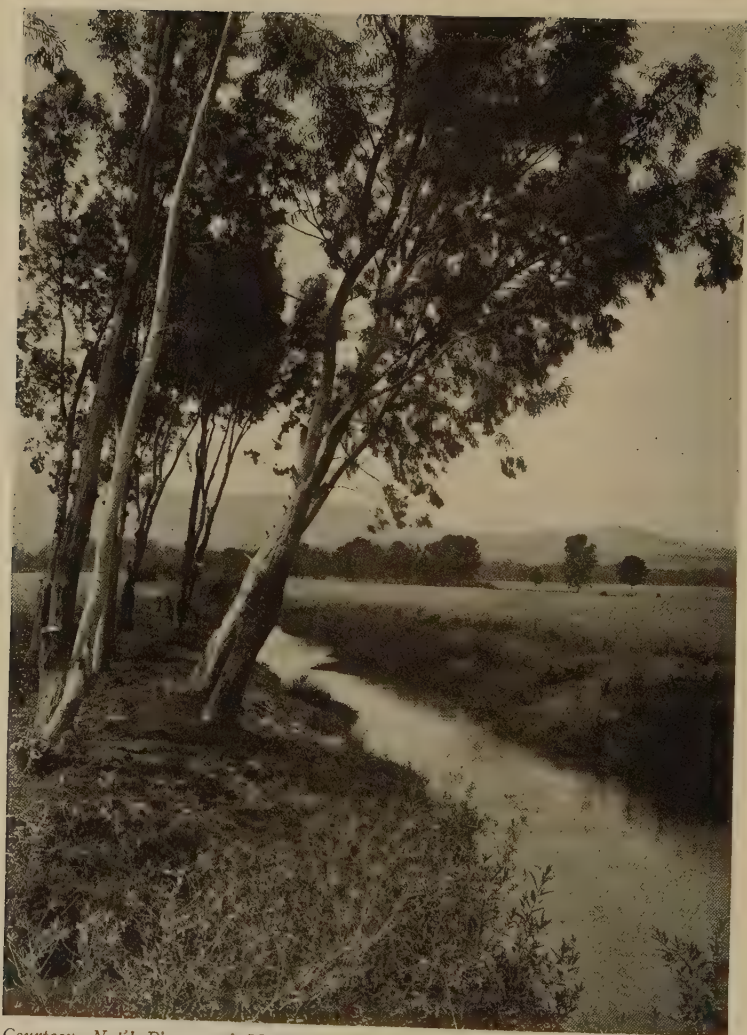


*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### SNOW-CROWNED POPOCATÉPETL

The white beauty and majesty of the volcano led Indians to believe it was the home of the gods.





*Courtesy, Nat'l R'ways of Mexico*

**FARMLAND IN MICHOACAN**

Always there are hills, misty-blue, engirdling the  
plains and the valleys.

far higher than the Earth-monster ever could hope to reach.

Ixtaccíhuatl, Aztec for "The White Woman," and often called "The Sleeping Snow Woman," is about seventeen thousand feet high, and is of volcanic origin although its crater or craters have disappeared through the ages. The volcano gets its poetic name from its contour as seen from Mexico City; for it requires little imagination to form the three irregular peaks into the figure of a woman lying, face upward, covered with a snow-blanket. Between Ixtaccíhuatl and Popocatepetl, which lie about two and a half miles apart, there is a saddle formation, famous for having been chosen by Cortés as the gateway to the Valley of Mexico. Over this he and his enthusiastic army set forth, fresh from their orgy at Cholula, on the last stretch of their march into the golden city of the Aztecs.

Malintzin, or Malinche, is a volcanic peak arising alone out of the plateau about half-way between Mexico City and Vera Cruz. It was named for the faithful friend and interpreter of Cortés, the Aztec princess sold into slavery by her mother and given to Cortés in Tabasco. It is 14,636 feet high, often snow-crowned, and in its isolated position is a striking landmark.

Of all the volcanic peaks in Mexico, none is more beautiful and none more greatly loved than Orizaba, whose Indian name, Citlaltépetl, means "Star Moun-



tain." It stands on the boundary-line between the states of Vera Cruz and Puebla, and its peak, perpetually snow-clad, rests in the clouds 18,701 feet above the sea. It is the highest mountain in North America except Mount McKinley in Alaska. At sunrise, when the clouds have not yet claimed the peak, the view of it is magnificent. The snow of its summit is flooded with those ineffable colors of sunrise in the tropics, while above it hover the clouds, ready to descend, fleecy masses of rose, carmine, lavender and pale gold. The "Star Mountain," with its exquisite symmetry, its evanescent coloring, and the massive grandeur of its contour, is a handiwork of nature to reverence even in this enlightened day; there is about it an unforgettable beauty and majesty.

The ancient Toltecs believed that their Sky-god, Quetzalcoatl, driven from their capital Tollán and then from their sacred city Cholula, sought peace on the heights of Citlaltépetl, and at last descended into its crater and burned his body to ashes which rose in the form of many birds. For four days, then, the god tarried in the Underworld; for another four days "he was bones"; and after eight days his heart ascended through the crater, rose into the sky, and became the morning-star.

The active volcano of Colima, in the state of Colima, is beautiful in its contour—an almost perfect cone, twelve thousand feet high. It is called by the

natives "Fire Mountain." Its huge crater is in a continuous state of seething, rumbling, boiling lava; and great quantities of smoke and steam constantly pour out. These smoke-clouds often are flame-tinted with the fire-glow, and at night stand out in striking beauty against the blue-black sky. The snow-crowned Nevada de Colima rises two thousand feet higher than the volcano.

In Michoacan is the active Jorullo, which pushed itself upward seven thousand feet while the amazed natives watched in awe and terror. In 1759 only a level plain was there. One day the earth began to rumble and as the noise grew in violence the natives working in the fields fled in terror. But irresistibly they were drawn back, and for three months they watched with increasing alarm. Then came the gigantic upheaval, and the peaks of Jorullo remained, hurling out hot stones and boiling mud and sputtering great clouds of smoke and steam. Innumerable small fumeroles, called by the natives "little ovens," dot the plains nearby, and the huge crater of Jorullo is almost constantly smoking. The Indians, at the time of the appearance of the volcano, were torn between two great fears, for they could not determine whether it was caused by the monks working magic or by their own angry gods. The monks had threatened dire things to the country, including a deluge of fire, if the Indians did not give up their secret idol-worship;

the natives had paid little attention, continuing to worship the white man's god in public and their own gods in secret—public worship of Aztec gods at that time meant torture and death at the stake by the Inquisition. And then, following upon the threat of the monks, this terrible thing had happened to their maize-fields. Perhaps the white man's god was angry; more likely it was their own gods, for had not the Earth-monster, there before their eyes, shown its might and the Fire-god stalked forth?

On the high plateau, the *tierra fria*, the nights and the early mornings are very cold. The *tierra templada*, from about three to five thousand feet elevation on both the eastern and the western slopes of the Sierra Madre, is called the Land of Perpetual Spring, for the climate is delightful, never severely cold like the uplands nor baking under torrid heat like parts of the *tierra caliente*.

But it is in the *tierra caliente* that much of Mexico's scenic charm lies. This strip, extending along both coasts and broadening out to include the states of Yucatan, Campeche, Tabasco, and parts of Chiapas and Oaxaca, is a dense mass of tropical vegetation. Whole forests of giant trees—mahogany, rosewood, cedar, rubber—are lost under a close-woven blanket of lianas and other climbers that fling themselves from branch to branch and in their gluttonous struggle to get the sun shut out all vegetation beneath. This

canopy, as merciless as it is, is a beautiful tangle of highly glossed leaves and of flowers whose gorgeous reds and oranges and magenta-blues call far and wide to the bees to come and sip. Myriads of humming-birds hover over the flowers, industriously seeking not honey but the insects that have crawled into the blossoms to drink of the nectar. Beneath this dense canopy of matted tree-tops and tangled vines, in the soft twilight that exists below, a continuous warfare is waged among the lesser plants, each wanting the tiny flecks of sun that somehow sift through. The wisest and the sturdiest of the plants, even some palms, have in self-defense developed the climbing habit.

Through these tropical jungles wander the wild creatures, safe in the seclusion of the almost impenetrable forests; while the lagoons and the mangrove swamps that fringe the sea are alive with crocodiles, alligators, and huge green turtles. Snakes, too, are plentiful, the deadly "palanca" and the rattlesnake being the most dangerous. The jungle snakes long ago learned to climb trees to seek for prey, and they mimic the color of their surroundings so perfectly that only a keen observer can distinguish a snake from a tree-branch or the twisted trunk of a liana. A strange and interesting snake found near the Gulf coast is called by the natives the *centoatl*; it feeds by day, and when darkness comes emits a luminous glow through

the pores of its skin to frighten off such enemies as may be abroad by night.

Among the tropical insects of the *tierra caliente* two hold first rank in interest. One is the leaf-cutting ant, which strips bare whole trees and carries the leaves to her underground storehouses, there to let them ferment into food which she and her young find wholly delectable. The other is the strange and very beautiful greenish-black beetle which the natives call *cucuji*, or lantern-bug. These beetles are common throughout all the tropical forests of the country, and they produce a phosphorescent light that is so brilliant the natives utilize them for lanterns, placing only a few of them in a small bamboo cage made for the purpose. Men having to be abroad by night tie a row of the beetles about their ankles, to light the path ahead; and little Indian boys rub the phosphorus over their faces and jump out from behind palm-trees à la bogey-man. The early Spaniards who found the beetles in the forests of Chiapas were utterly amazed. One good friar wrote of them:

“These shining Beetles were somewhat smaller than Sparrows, having two Stars close by their Eyes, and two more under their Wings, which gave so great a light that by it they could spin, weave, write, and paint; and the Spaniards went by night to hunt the *Utios*, or little Rabbits of that country; and a-fishing, carrying these Animals tied to their great Toes or

Thumbs; and they called them *Locuyos*, being also of use to save them from the Gnats, which are there very troublesome. They took them in the Night with Firebrands, because they made to the light, and came when called by their Name; and they are so unwieldy that when they fall they cannot rise again; and the Men stroaking their Faces and Hands with a sort of Moisture that is in those Stars, seemed to be afire as long as it lasted."

In both vegetation and animal life the peninsula of Yucatan stands apart from the remainder of Mexico because of its coral formation and its almost total absence of surface rivers. The soil is porous and during the rainy season absorbs the water almost as quickly as it falls. Far underground, however, streams are running and these, where they do not connect with the surface by natural wells or *cenotes*, are tapped, and wherever there is a hacienda a windmill will be seen. The *cenotes* are usually in the form of beautiful caves—coral grottoes adorned with stalactites and stalagmites of glistening white limestone. On their floor is a deep pool of clear, cool water, or often many pools, or an underground river that lingers only long enough to form a well or a bathing-place for the grateful *Yucatecos*.

In the coast towns, away from the *cenotes*, the houses are built with reservoirs where during the rainy season sufficient water is collected to last throughout the year. Little fishes are placed in these tanks to eat



the mosquito-larvæ and so keep the water free from the deadly yellow fever germs.

The entire peninsula is a sandy plain, with a few low hills rising here and there. Cool breezes from the Caribbean sweep across the plain, tempering what otherwise would be unbearable heat, and these winds carry with them a moisture which the plant-life greedily absorbs. The absence of surface rivers seems to have little effect upon the luxuriance of Yucatan's vegetation; for immense areas are devoted to the cultivation of cotton or of henequén, and a field once neglected is soon a mass of tangled vines and shrubbery which seems to spring up overnight. In the south dense forests are to be found, many of them of valuable cabinet and dye woods.

In all of Mexico there are no really great rivers. The largest is the Rio Grande de Santiago, rising in Mexico State and emptying into the Pacific. Until it reaches the broad Lake Chapala it is called the Rio Lerma. It has a total length of more than six hundred miles and in its tortuous passage through the mountainous region of Jalisco it forms magnificent waterfalls and rushes through wild, deep canyons. The Barranca de Oblatos, about five miles from Guadalajara, is its grandest gorge, two thousand feet deep, and superb in its beauty in spite of the encroaching commercialism in the form of power-houses and truck-gardens.

The famous Falls of Juanacatlán, called the Niagara of Mexico, are formed by the Rio Grande de Santiago in its plunge over a broad ledge seventy feet high and more than five hundred feet wide. In the rainy season this is one solid sheet of mud-yellow water; in the dry season—September to June—the river tumbles over the cliff in from twenty to thirty narrow falls, with the brown of the rocks and the green of water-loving plants showing between. It is less majestic, with its many falls, but far more beautiful. Below, in the basin the water has scooped out for itself, the spray leaps upward, catches the rainbow tints in the sunshine, tumbles back into the pool, and whirls madly off down the canyon carrying with it myriads of bright-blue blossoms. These are of the *lirio*, which grows with a persistence and a rapidity that the rushing torrent of the river cannot discourage: thousands are uprooted and flung over the falls, but thousands more seem to spring up in their places.

Water-power is too scarce in Mexico for falls, even delightfully picturesque ones like those of Juanacatlán, to be reserved for their beauty alone. The unlovely power-houses were not in nature's scheme and cannot be fitted in with the beauty of falling water, with rainbow-tinted spray, with ferns dripping mist-drops; but the power-houses are inevitable, and they are progressive Mexico.

The Falls of Necaxa, in the state of Puebla, fur-

nish Mexico City, a hundred miles away, with electricity. These falls, five hundred and forty feet high, are beautiful and awe-inspiring. The Rio Necaxa forms many smaller and exquisite cascades in its rush downward through a wild barranca.

All of the rivers which pour down from the heights of the Sierra Madre form superb cataracts, for the slopes are so abrupt that the water often must fall vertically from terrace to terrace.

There is scarcely any part of Mexico that does not show evidences of having been, in æons past, a lake-bed; yet the Mexico of today has few lakes. The gulf coast is fringed with lagoons shut in by sandbars, but these are no more than arms of the sea and scarcely can be termed lakes. The Plateau of Mexico is dotted with small lagoons and marshy depressions, and some of the lakes the Spaniards found here still exist although in much smaller extent. Lake Texcuco is the largest and the most beautiful of those near Mexico City. Its water, fringed with glossy hyacinths, lies like a sheet of silver, reflecting the blue of the sky or mirroring the storm-black clouds. Lake Chalco, Lake Zumpango, and Lake San Cristóbal are fast disappearing; and Lake Xochimilco, once so broad and beautiful, has virtually given way entirely to the marshy land now utilized for floating-gardens.

The largest lake in Mexico, and by far the loveliest and most interesting, is Chapala, lying on the boundary

between Jalisco and Michoacan. On the shores of this lake, sometimes called the Chapalan Sea, Mexico has her Riviera. The lake is seventy miles long by twenty miles wide, and is more than five thousand feet above sea-level. Ribera Castellanos, the popular watering-place, is a picturesque town built along the lake shore. Because of its comfortable hotels and modern conveniences it is not nearly so quaint and interesting as the many Indian hamlets, huddled on the white beaches or peeping from out of the close-crowding trees that run back into the hills. The Indian fishermen go out in the morning with hammock-like nets, while the women sit at home and weave the reed-mats for which the *Chapaltecos* are famous.

At all the larger villages on the shores of Lake Chapala boats are to be hired, and there is a varied choice, from modern launches to primitive dugouts. Sailing is a joy in spite of the sudden *vientos* that come up unannounced and blow with hurricane fury during the brief time they last; swimming is a delight, for the water is cold enough to be bracing, yet not too cold; fishing in the lake and hunting in the adjacent woodlands bring joy to those who find pleasure in sport, for both lake and woodland teem with game. Myriads of wild-fowl come to this region to winter. The honk-honk of snow-geese from far-off northern Canada mingles with the clacking of native wild-ducks. In the shallow waters cranes stand be-

side great blue herons and snow-white pelicans. The beautiful American egrets come timidly, and remain, delicate fluffs of white. At twilight loons scream, and in the early morning thousands of song-birds fill the air with a choral of joy. The perpetual Indian summer that exists, the plentiful marshes, and the small, unfrequented islands, form a veritable paradise for birds, large and small.

Much of the lake shore is heavily wooded; in places rolling hills extend back from the water. The hills are covered with ragged patches of maize which grows to an astounding height; and here and there lie flower-sprinkled valleys which run down to the water. Numerous islands dot the lake. Mescala is the largest, and on it are the ruins of a presidio, which once served alternately as a fortress and a prison. The name of the *Isla de los Sacrificios* is suggestive of the days of pagan worship. Many of the islands are too small to be inhabited except by the ever-present lizard and the deadly scorpion.

Lake Chapala is especially beautiful at sunrise when the first flushes of crimson and orange tinge the water through a veil of morning mist. The very name of the lake is poetry: it is the word the Indians used to describe the soft lap of the waves against the shore—*chapala*.

Lake Pátzcuaro, in Michoacan, is considered by many to be even more beautiful than Lake Chapala.

Densely-wooded hills rise from the shores. The sage-green water is dotted with islands and picturesque with native fishing-boats. These boats are the primitive dugouts, made usually from the trunk of a pine-tree, the interior burned out, the bottom left thick and heavy for ballast. The fishermen, standing in their sturdy craft, cast a butterfly-net with a quick dip into the water which rarely fails to bring up a struggling *pescado blanco*. The irregular shores of the lake are dotted with native villages. Xanicho, the most important of the islands, is a charming spot, its glistening white houses all but hidden among the green of the trees and vines and the gold-brown of the rocks. A cave on this island was once the shrine of the Tarascan gods when pagan worship was prohibited by the monks, and punishable by death. Idols have been found there; but bats and snakes and venomous scorpions guard the cave well today, and white men do not care to penetrate too far. The Indians believe that the bats and serpents are kept there by the gods themselves, to see that their shrine is not desecrated.

About fourteen miles across the lake from the town of Pátzcuaro is the ancient city of Tzintzuntzan, once the capital of the Tarascan empire, the home of the kings of Michoacan. Relics of these early Tarascans still exist in the form of crumbling ruins and many T-shaped mounds. From some of the mounds volcanic-stone idols have been taken, flint and obsidian



weapons, and other relics of a long-ancient race. A few of the idols bear a strange resemblance to a statue of Chac-Mool, the Tiger King, found in far-off Yucatan. Ruins of the earliest Spanish missions are here too, and crumbling convents long deserted. Like many of the ancient cities of Mexico, Tzintzuntzan is tunneled with a network of passages which the natives hold in superstitious awe and which white men find it difficult to explore. Many were walled up by the natives long ago and all evidences of them hidden.

Pátzcuaro means "Place of Pleasure." The water is beautiful at all times, and in the afternoons when a wind blows up and the sea is choppy it is superb.

Michoacan has many smaller and exquisite lakes which lie sheltered in the wooded hills like great silver mirrors, scarcely rippling, sending back the reflections of ragged trees and deep-blue sky. Lake Cuitzeo is one of the most interesting because of its island inhabited by a few Indians, primitive in the extreme, who refuse to have any communication with the outside world; the plentiful fish and wild-fowl and their little patches of maize are sufficient for all their needs. Lake Zirahuén lies in a wild subtropical region, shut in by forested hills, its shores reed-grown and irregular, the haunts of myriads of wild-fowl.

In southern and western Coahuila and eastern Chihuahua, where once in æons past a lake existed, there is now a vast desert known as the Bolson de

Mapimí. In Chihuahua it is called the Llano de los Cristianos, because in the early days of the Jesuit padres many converts were driven out of the mountains by those who clung to their old gods, and had to wander, nomads, over the desert; in Coahuila it is the Llano de los Gigantes because of the bones of mastodons and other mammoths which have been unearthed there. On this vast desert thousands of acres of wind-blown sand lie golden under the sun or gay with bright-blossomed cacti. For mile after mile the sand rolls on, broken only by buttes of reddish rock, deeply corrugated, which rise abruptly out of the plain. And then comes a delightful oasis—sometimes a mere marshy lagoon, often an extensive and beautiful lake.

Wherever the land is watered by these natural lakes, or by irrigation from mountain reservoirs or artesian wells, it is extremely fertile. Valuable crops of cotton, grain, legumes, and melons are raised; fruit ranches thrive; the mulberry and the olive, so strictly forbidden when the Spaniards ruled the country, are now grown on a large scale; and the Parras grapes from southern Coahuila are unexcelled for wine. During the centuries of the viceroys every grapevine discovered was destroyed and the owner of the land severely punished because "the King hath commanded, upon paine of Death, that they should not plant either Wine or Oile there, but should stand in need of them to be brought out of Spaine, although there would

more grow there in Foure Yeares, then groweth in Spaine in Twenty, it is so fertile a Countrey."

Cattle-raising is an important industry in both Coahuila and Chihuahua, and it is not unusual to see on these plains vast herds of semi-wild horses seemingly unattended, but a ragged Indian will be hidden somewhere among the tall cacti or resting in the shade of a cottonwood-tree. Herds of goats wander across the waste and are lost in the shimmering heat-waves. Long-eared rabbits and desert-loving coyotes are ever-present; as are the strange horned toads and the bright-hued lizards. Rattlesnakes, tarantulas, and deadly scorpions, plentiful wherever there is a sandy hill or a sun-warmed rock, add zest to a trip across the plains.

In Chihuahua are the ruins of the Casas Grandes, Big Houses, similar in structure to the Casa Grande in Arizona which Padre Kino found already an ancient ruin in 1694, and no doubt built by the same prehistoric people, for in both architecture and material they are similar. They were constructed with adobe bricks made of sundried mud well sprinkled with gravel, and rose in many stories, the ground floor being filled in with earth and the second story reached by means of a ladder which could be drawn up when danger threatened. Each house was a village in itself. Today mere crumbling ruins remain, as monuments to their unknown builders. Perhaps the Toltecs on their migration to the Valley of Mexico



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

**IXTACCÍHUATL, "THE WHITE WOMAN"**

Beyond a field of ragged maize, the sleeping snow-woman  
lies with her face upturned to the sky.



*Copyright, Ewing Galloway*

### THE FALLS OF JUANACATLÁN

In the rainy season these many falls become one solid sheet of water.



lingered here; their traditions and picture-writings indicate that they traveled southward from the west bank of the Colorado, crossed the Gulf of California, and stopped for long periods of time in Sonora and Chihuahua. In Lower California are many evidences of their passage, in the form of crumbling adobe ruins and picture-written records on cliffs sheltered from the rare rains and the frequent sand-swirls.

The peninsula of Baja California, like Yucatan, stands apart, topographically, from the remainder of Mexico. It is nearly eight hundred miles long, and is traversed from north to south by a mountain range which rises precipitously from the Gulf of California coast and drops gradually in terraces and gentle slopes to the Pacific. In the north of the peninsula rain rarely falls, and the bare, volcanic mountains have a wholly desolate appearance. But the fact that they are rich in minerals, especially gold, gives them a peculiar interest. In the central zone vegetation is more plentiful. Cotton, henequén, and other crops are grown successfully; and an unusual industry is the gathering of Spanish moss which is found in abundance along the Pacific coast and is used for dyes. The mountains here, too, are rich in minerals, including silver and gold, although copper and iron take first place. In the south, silver leads, but almost every other known mineral is found. Rains are more regular and abundant in the southern zone, and the vege-



tation is more varied and plentiful. Pearl-fishing, carried on for countless centuries by the natives, is still the main industry, centering about La Paz, the capital of the Southern District of the peninsula. Ensenada de Todos Santos, All Saints' Cove, on the Pacific coast, is the capital of the Northern District.

In 1536 when Cortés was searching feverishly for a strait which he believed would be found to connect the Pacific with the Atlantic, he sailed northward from Tehuantepec and discovered Baja California. Some of the men in his expedition carried back to Mexico City marvelous tales of an island inhabited by sirens guarded by fierce and gigantic Amazons. This was too much for Francisco de Ulloa; he set forth at once to find the luring maidens, and in his search for the mythical island he discovered Magdalena Bay.

This beautiful arm of the Pacific, forty miles long by twelve miles broad, is shut in by the rocky and irregular Santa Margarita Island. It was long the rendezvous of pirates and was their place of frequent refuge. Drake sought shelter there from a furious hurricane which swept the Pacific; Rodgers hastened in, all sails spread, and lay hidden for days in a secluded cove; Woods brought in a captured Spanish galleon. It is claimed that in undreamed-of caves on Santa Margarita Island much of the pirate gold was hidden and never reclaimed.

Whether because of these tales of buccaneer days,

whether because of the mineral wealth of the peninsula, or whether because of the fascination of its immense unknown areas, there is a strange lure about Baja California. Certainly there is beauty in the lagoon-fringed shore of the gulf and the rocky coast of the ocean; there is beauty even in the desolation of the bare brown mountains.

But perhaps the lure of Baja California is merely the lure of all of Mexico. For there is a charm that comes not alone from the beauty of the country, a charm that is steeped in the glamour of Mexico's centuries-old traditions, in the mystery that surrounds those races of the past whose sculptured temples and palaces still stand as monuments to their civilization, whose art rivaled that of the Egyptians.



## II. YUCATAN: THE LAND OF MYSTERY

MAYA-QUICHÉ CIVILIZATION  
THE COMING OF THE GOD VOTAN  
THE LEGEND OF THE HOUSE OF DARKNESS  
THE RUINS OF PALENQUE  
THE MIGRATION INTO YUCATAN  
THE SACRED ITZAMAL  
MAYAPAN, THE CITY OF KUKULKAN  
PRIESTS OF THE FEATHERED SERPENT  
CHICHEN-ITZA, THE HOLY CITY  
THE STRENGTH OF UXMAL  
THE JOURNEY TO THE HEREAFTER  
THE WAR OF THE TIGER KING  
THE END OF THE MAYA EMPIRE  
THE RELIGION OF THE MAYAS  
THE RUINS OF YUCATAN  
THE LEGEND OF THE MOON-GOD



## II

### YUCATAN: THE LAND OF MYSTERY

THE very word *Yucatan* breathes of mystery and is pregnant with the glamour of the unknown. For it conjures up sunbaked plains and tangled forests, and hidden away in their unfrequented corners whole cities, thousands of years old perhaps, now in eloquent ruins. Sculptured temples to the Sun-god, rich in adornment and built long before the birth of Christ, stand today, defying time, the handiwork of a race that in civilization was far in advance of many European peoples of that same period.

These first inhabitants of the peninsula of Yucatan, the Maya-Quiché, are shrouded in deep mystery; and this is added to by the fact that they were wholly unlike any other race on the two American continents and must, therefore, have had a different origin. The earliest more or less definite knowledge that exists regarding them is that about 5000 B.C.—perhaps earlier, perhaps later—they were established in the valley of the Usumacinta River, in southern Mexico and Guatemala, and even at that date they already had reached a stage of civilization that is truly remarkable. Still



standing as monuments to their architectural ability are the ruins of their principal cities of that remote time: Palenque, Ocosingo, Quirigua, Copan.

Wherever the Maya-Quiché settled, their first step was to erect a temple to the Sun-god, or to his chief representative, the Feathered Serpent. Then came temples to the Moon-god, the Rain-god, the Earth-monster, and finally the House of the Magician, where the high priest might receive his messages from the gods through the medium of the stars, the winds, the formation of the clouds. The temples invariably were placed upon a mound, four-squared to the points of the compass, and terraced with geometrical exactness. The architecture was so skilfully planned, the masonry so substantially constructed, and the entire terraces and buildings so elaborately decorated with inscriptions relating to their kings and their gods that the ruins form today a vast storehouse of knowledge, much of it as yet undeciphered, of these long-ago people of prehistoric Mexico.

As the sun rises in the east, so from the east, according to their legends, came the great god Votan, in the form of an aged man with gray beard and white, flowing robes. Passing the Cave of the Thirteen Snakes, he ascended the Usumacinta River and eventually founded the city of Palenque. On one of his frequent visits back to his original home he came upon a tower being built to reach up to the heavens;

but there was a great confusion of tongues among the builders and their plans came to naught. Votan, however, being a god, reached the Rock of Heaven by a subterranean passage. Returning to Palenque he built, "by the breath of his nostrils," the House of Darkness, so called because of its subterranean chambers; and here, underground, he placed the national records and treasure and appointed a woman to guard them, with thirteen other women to guard her.

In this story myth and fact are strangely mingled. Nuñez de la Vega, Bishop of Chiapas long years after the Conquest, described the House of Darkness, in the city of Huehueta, and added: "The treasure consisted of jars, which were closed with covers of the same clay, and of a room in which the picture of the ancient heathens who are in the calendar were engraved in stone, together with *chalchiuites* (which are small, heavy, green stones) and other superstitious images; and . . . all these things were publicly burned in the market-place of Huehueta when we inspected the aforesaid province in 1691. All the Indians greatly revere this Votan, and in a certain province they call him 'Heart of the Cities.' "

Certainly the ancient Votan came, as he announced, on a divine mission. He taught the people to till the soil, he instructed them in the art of masonry, he invented writing, and he showed them how by a study

of the sun and the moon and the stars they could perfect their calendar.

Palenque, in present-day Chiapas, supposedly founded by Votan, is among the oldest of all existing Maya-Quiché ruins, and from the magnificence of its palaces and temples and the vast extent of the city, it is believed to have been the capital of the great Maya-Quiché empire. Its ancient name is unknown; perhaps it was Huchueta; it was called Palenque by its Spanish discoverers because the nearest Indian village had that name. For untold centuries after the Mayas deserted this center of their culture, with its palaces of stone and stucco, wondrously carved, beautifully painted, and covered with elaborate inscriptions, the ruins of this immense city lay buried, undreamed of, in the dense tropical forests. Trees of gigantic size have grown up in the buildings; the strangling vegetation of centuries has buried all but a few of the temples and palaces.

Palenque remained unknown until 1750 when some Spaniards, interested in tales told them by the Indians of a place they called Houses of Stone, cut their way with swords and machetes through the dense vegetation and came upon a huge building, standing upon a terraced pyramid forty feet high. This undoubtedly was a temple, more than two hundred feet long, and facing the east. Its masterly architecture, its artistic sculpturing, the beauty and symmetry of the idols

found within it, and the many inscriptions on the walls, showed the Spaniards that they had made a discovery of great archæological importance. A writer who visited the ruins a few years later and described the "fourteen edifices" at that time unearthed, was especially impressed by "a subterranean aqueduct of great solidity and durability, which passes under the largest building."

Even today the ruins of Palenque are difficult of access, but they are among the most interesting in the world, and there is about them the fascination of the unexplored, for little excavation has been done and most of the city still lies, in who can say what splendor, beneath the growth and decay of the vegetation of countless centuries.

While Palenque was at the zenith of its glory and Maya-Quiché kings were having their exploits carved on the tablets still to be seen there, their empire was gradually spreading out over present-day Chiapas, parts of Tabasco and Oaxaca, and in the other direction Guatemala and Honduras. Then, probably during a period of many years, the ancient centers of Maya-Quiché culture were deserted, not destroyed but abandoned, left to the mercy of the elements and the strangling jungle. Whether a savage horde swept down from the north, whether an unusual number of earthquakes, droughts, or successive pestilences spelled dire things to the superstitious Mayas, or whether

merely a wave of restlessness swept over the people, they deserted their holy cities in the valley of the Usumacinta and set out for new territories, traveling in separate groups, each with its own leader. Their movements were directed by the priests as the interpreters of the gods. When the priests said halt, there the people would stop, their first act being to erect a temple to the Sun-god. Sometimes they remained as long as fifty years in one place. Then, suddenly, the gods would bid them move on—scarcity of water and similar practical matters had much to do with this decision of the gods.

About one hundred and fifty years after this migration began, one band of Maya-Quichés moved northward from Guatemala into Yucatan and, finding a pleasant lake, founded the city of Bacalan upon its shore. These were the first inhabitants of Yucatan.

A half-century later another group, under Itzamna, pushed farther north and founded the sacred city of Itzamal, which was to become one of the four great cities of Yucatan. Itzamna, its founder and first ruler, became a god after his death and ranked among the principal deities of the Mayas.

At about the same time that Itzamal was founded, still another band of Maya-Quichés, under Kukulcan, entered Yucatan and founded the town that for many centuries was to be the greatest city in the Maya empire. This was Mayapan. Kukulcan is described as

a wise and benevolent ruler. He especially encouraged architectural beauty and sculpture; he had the great art of writing taken out of the exclusive control of the priests and taught to any one who wished to learn; but he seems to be remembered mainly for his establishment of the princely house of the Cocomes, who play an important part in the following few centuries of Maya history. Kukulkan, like Itzamna, was deified, and soon rose so high in Maya worship that he ranked second to none, being identical with their greatest god, the Feathered Serpent.

Both Itzamal and Mayapan were ruled completely by the priesthood, and there was constant clash between them as to the supremacy of their chief deity. Itzamal glorified its former ruler, Itzamna; while Mayapan claimed that Kukulkan was the highest god of all, and that Itzamna was merely a messenger-god to run his errands.

And while the priests of these two principalities held the government in their control, still another great town sprang up in Yucatan, for the descendants of those Maya-Quichés who had first settled at Bacalan moved northward and founded Chichen-Itza. Unlike their neighbors, however, these Mayas kept their priests exclusively to religion and chose for their rulers princes and warriors, known as the Tutul-Xius. Perhaps because the priests were devoting themselves wholly to religion, and perhaps partly be-



cause of the magnificent temples which were constructed, Chichen-Itza soon became one of the very sacred cities—like Teotihuacán and Cholula among the northern tribes. More than a century of peace and prosperity followed the founding of Chichen-Itza, and during this time not only were temples and palaces of great splendor erected and all but covered with the inscriptions which give their ruins today such intense interest, but elaborate state buildings as well beautified the city. Aqueducts of stone and mortar were constructed, private gardens and public parks laid out, fields irrigated, and the beautiful and prosperous city justly felt that it was especially favored by the gods.

But all this time the Cocomes at Mayapan were looking upon Chichen-Itza with envious eyes. They had been growing stronger during this century and more; and the capital of the Tutul-Xius, with all its beautiful temples and public buildings, was still smaller and weaker than Mayapan. So the Cocomes suddenly descended upon Chichen-Itza and had little difficulty in making it a dependency of the great Mayapan and exacting yearly tribute. The proud Tutul-Xius, princes all, rather than bow to the yoke of the Cocomes, gathered their families and their followers and crossed the entire peninsula of Yucatan, settling on the northern coast, at Chan-Putan (Champotan). There they soon came into contact with the warlike Nahuas, of

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Anáhuac, which covered the greater part of central and northern Mexico.

For two hundred years the Tutul-Xius remained at Chan-Putan, growing ever stronger; until at last they felt that they could well defy their old enemies, the Cocomes, at Mayapan. Their first step, under their ruler Ahcuítok-Tutul-Xiu, was to move their capital from Chan-Putan to a new site farther inland which they named Uxmal and which is today one of the most fascinating of all the ruins of Yucatan. At Uxmal they built the wonderful palaces and temples whose sculptured walls are still standing, they brought water into their city through well-constructed aqueducts, they landscaped their gardens and beautified their parks as their ancestors had done long years before in Chichen-Itza, and, with Mayapan still in view, they drilled their armies and played such games as would give their soldiers agility and accuracy in battle. Their weapons were bows and arrows and a sort of scimitar made of sharp-edged obsidian.

But the Cocomes at Mayapan were watching and fearing the growing strength of the Tutul-Xius, and, rather than have their city destroyed, they craftily invited Tutul-Xiu princes to rule once more not only in their former Chichen-Itza but in Itzamal as well.

Many years of peace followed, and this period was spent by the Tutul-Xius in adding further architectural grandeur to all the cities under their dominion. They

had splendid roads built, for religious purposes only, extending from the main temple at Chichen-Itza out into the country in the four directions of the compass, so that pilgrims might come from afar to worship in the sacred city. One of these roads extended from Chichen-Itza entirely across the peninsula to the point nearest the island of Cozumel, which also was sacred ground and to which many religious pilgrimages were made.

Among the idols found in Cozumel were four that are believed to represent the Bacabs. These four gods, according to the Mayas, held up the heavens to keep it from falling, just as four other gods upheld the earth. Hades, being in the middle of the earth, needed no support. Unlike the Christian hell of fire and brimstone, Hades to the Mayas was merely a place of rest; but the journey thither from the earth was an arduous one, beset with terrors and agony. When the Soul left this world and started on its journey to the Hereafter, the first danger was the crashing together of two mountains. If the Soul escaped being crushed here, the next terror was a monster Dragon who waited with open jaws. Beyond the Dragon were eight Deserts and eight Hills, each to be traversed, and each with a thousand frights. Then came the terrible Crocodile; and beyond it the Wind of Sharp-edged Knives; and last of all the River of the Nine Waters, which one could cross only on the

back of a red-colored dog. A Soul courageous enough to survive these many terrors was deserving of the eternal rest which then awaited him in the Region of the Dead. Even there, however, he first must make presents to the gods of Hades; and for this purpose not only were food and treasure buried with the Maya dead but gifts suitable for the gods of the Underworld. They seemed especially to desire rich garments, robes of hummingbird feathers or ornaments wrought in gold and jewels.

The three principalities of the Tutul-Xius—Uxmal, Itzamal, and Chichen-Itza—were still tributary to the more powerful Mayapan, with its tyrant ruler, Hunac Eel. One of Hunac Eel's first acts was to create an aristocracy in Mayapan, and the newly made aristocrats, that they might join their ruler in a life of ease and revelry, needed innumerable slaves. These Hunac Eel easily supplied by exacting a tribute of human beings from the Tutul-Xiu principalities.

Unable, at last, to stand the increasing tyranny of the Cocomes at Mayapan, the Tutul-Xius once more revolted. This was in 1182, and was directly caused by the Mayapan ruler. Hunac Eel, desiring a beautiful princess who was to marry Chac-Mool the ruler of Chichen-Itza, waited until the wedding ceremony had been completed and, as was customary in such celebrations, every one in Chichen was thoroughly intoxicated, and then he and his soldiers fell upon the

city, killed many of its inhabitants, and carried off the royal bride. Chac-Mool, the Tiger King, and his infuriated subjects called upon their confederate, Itzamal, for aid; but by the time their combined army was in shape Hunac Eel also had strengthened his forces with an army from the powerful and warlike Nahuas who were greedy for the treasures promised them in return for their assistance.

The result of the brief war that followed was the complete destruction of Chichen-Itza which for at least six hundred years, possibly much longer, had been the sacred city of all the Mayas. Chac-Mool's followers fled to the forests of southern Yucatan; and Hunac Eel then turned his attention toward punishing Itzamal for rendering assistance to the Tutul-Xiu army. This city, also, was utterly destroyed. And so the great city of Mayapan now held sway over practically all of Yucatan, excepting only Uxmal, the capital of the Tutul-Xius, which was spared because it had remained neutral in the Tiger King's war. Even Uxmal, however, was tributary to Mayapan.

After Hunac Eel's death the Cocomes at Mayapan, feeling secure with the army of fierce Nahua warriors they had imported, became more and more arrogant and tyrannical, exacting such tribute from Uxmal that the Xius were practically slaves and at last this city, too, revolted. Secretly gathering and training an army from all the neighboring small states which were





*Courtesy, Consulado General de México in N. Y.*

**VERA CRUZ HARBOR AT SUNSET**

Under the flaming sky of sunset the indigo water ripples in shades of rose and purple and deep gold.





*Courtesy, Am. Museum Natural History*

**A MAYA RUIN AT UXMAL**

A corner of the House of Nuns, built a thousand years ago.

writhing under the heel of the Cocomes, the Xi swept upon Mayapan bent upon giving no quarter. Nor did they. The proud city was completely destroyed, and nearly all of its inhabitants were killed, the Nahua warriors falling with the others.

Shortly after this victory the Xius abandoned their ancient city of Uxmal and established their capital at Maní. Of the four great cities of Yucatan—Chichen-Itza, Itzamal, Mayapan, and Uxmal—Uxmal alone was not destroyed; it was merely abandoned, left to the destructive elements of time and the weather and the encroaching jungle.

The date of the fall of Mayapan is believed to have been about 1430. With the end of the powerful Cocomes, Yucatan no longer was held together with one central point of civilization but became divided into seven kingdoms, each independent of the other. These separate kingdoms were constantly at war one with another; and in this discord, weakened by almost a century of intermittent fighting, the Spaniards found them when they arrived in 1517. Alvarado's soldiers, in 1520, were quartered in the long-abandoned ruins of Chichen-Itza. Mérida, the present capital of Yucatan, replaced the ancient Itza village of T-ho, only a few miles from the sacred Itzamal.

The Maya religion was based upon the belief in one supreme and invisible god, the creator of the universe, "the giver of life and light." Kukulcan—called Gu-

cumatz in Guatemala—the Feathered Serpent, pictured on their temples and mentioned in many of their writings, was originally merely the representative of the great Sun-god, but later he became identical with this highest deity. Under him were innumerable lesser gods, who were worshiped according to the periods set aside for them by the priesthood. The Maya religion bore little resemblance to that of the later Nahuas of central and northern Mexico, especially in the matter of human sacrifice. The Maya gods were content with offerings of birds and flowers, and occasionally the blood of a living priest who voluntarily submitted to torture—the favorite method being to draw a rope, studded with sharp thorns at every half-inch, slowly across the tongue, letting the blood drip into a vessel at the feet of the idol. Human sacrifice was not unknown to them; but it was made only when the sacred fires were relighted at the beginning of a new cycle of fifty-two years. Later, when the Mayas intermingled with the Nahuas, the sacrifice of human beings may have been more common; but at no time did the Mayas eat their victims, as did the tribes to the north.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the Maya-Quiché civilization was their ability to express their ideas in written words. It shows an advance that was not equaled by any other tribe on the American continents at the time of the arrival of the white men.

Their writing was based upon the same pictographs that were used to represent the months and the days in their calendar—pictures of bird or animal heads or flowers, or symbols of natural phenomena.

The Maya-Quiché knowledge of astronomy, in the exclusive possession of the priesthood, excelled even that of the Egyptians of the same period. Their year was computed to an amazing exactness, being divided into eighteen months of twenty days each, with a nineteenth month of five days and an extra day added every four years. The year also was divided into twenty-eight weeks of thirteen days each, the one remaining day belonging to the gods and being given over to religious festivities. Every fourth year there were two of these god-days; and when these four-year periods had come around thirteen times that ended a *cycle* of fifty-two years and a new cycle began.

The numbers *four* and *thirteen* played an important part in the Maya calendar, in Maya architecture, and especially in Maya religion. The number *five* also was important to them, as representing the five months in each of the four periods of their religious calendar. The ruins of temples and sacred buildings found today are invariably built on a pyramid with five terraces, four-squared to the points of the compass.

Of the many Maya ruins in Yucatan the greatest interest centers about Chichen-Itza, the holy city, and Uxmal, the later capital of the Tutul-Xius. Today

these ancient cities are enshrouded in delightful mystery, but in another decade much more of their history and romance will be known, for systematic and scientific excavation is now going on. In Chichen-Itza the principal buildings at present are the Temple (called also the Prison); the Red House, with its painted walls; the beautifully sculptured Palace of the Monks (or House of the Nuns); and the Gymnasium, decorated with an elaborate border of serpents and having great stone rings set in the walls. Practically all these buildings are adorned with pictographic carvings, exquisitely wrought—serpents, turtles, lynxes, tigers, and earth-monsters or dragons, surrounded with flowering vines or with carefully chiseled inscriptions. Mural paintings represent warriors in battle, extraordinary deeds of the gods, or the exploits of the royal Tutul-Xius.

The ruins of Uxmal are even more extensive than are those of Chichen-Itza. This city, also, has its House of Nuns, standing upon a terraced pyramid and arranged about a quadrangular court. There is the strange, narrow edifice known as the Governor's House, built upon one of the most elaborate of the terraced foundations. The smooth walls of this building give way at the cornice to a mass of rich and elaborately sculptured ornaments. The House of the Dwarfs, the House of the Turtles, the House of the Tigers, decorated perhaps in honor of the Tiger



King, and the many other buildings are of supreme interest.

Kukulkan, sculptured everywhere, originally represented only the Sun-god, but later he became often the Wind-god, the Fire-god, and the Morning-star. One of the first Spaniards to describe him said "he never wore but one Garment of Cotton, which was white, narrow and long, and upon that a Mantle beset with certain red Crosses. They have certain green Stones which were his, and those they keep for Reliques. One of them is like an Ape's Head."

Everywhere in Maya sculpture the Moon-god is found depicted with almost the same importance as the Sun-god. The Moon-god, the Indians of Yucatan believed, lived during the day in a coral cave shaped like a snail-shell; in the evening he climbed into the sky and traveled the full length of the heavens, so that his light might shine on all the world. In those days the moon was always full. One morning when he returned to his snail-shell cave he found a small green turtle asleep in his bed. There was only room in the cave for the Moon-god, and he was very sleepy, so he put the turtle out. The next morning when he climbed down from the sky he found a much larger turtle in his bed; this one, too, the Moon-god put out. And the third morning there was a giant turtle there. This annoyed the Moon-god; for he



was very sleepy and it took a long time to get the giant turtle out.

After that the Moon-god asked his good friend the Water-god to guard the cave by night while he was off in the sky; and that seemed a happy arrangement, for whenever the Water-god was called into the sky, the Moon-god could return to the cave, for he could not shine through the rain. For a while all went very well. And then one evening the Water-god did not come; nor was he in the sky. The Moon-god must guard the cave and must shine from the heavens too.

Then it was that the first sickle-moon appeared, for the Moon-god sent only part of himself on high while the remainder stayed on guard. Each night more and more of him would circle the heavens and less and less of him stay at home; until finally there he was a full-moon again. But one evening as he set out he met a turtle, so part of him hurried back to guard his home. And so from that day to this, part of the Moon-god sails the sky while part guards his snail-shell cave, except during the full-moon, and then his cave is forgotten and perhaps, who knows, a giant turtle may be in his bed.

### III. TRIBES OF THE PAST

MITLA, THE CITY OF THE DEAD  
THE LEGEND OF THE TWO TREES  
WILD TRIBES OF THE NORTH  
THE ARRIVAL OF THE TOLTECS  
QUETZALCOATL, THE FEATHERED SERPENT  
THE CURSE OF PULQUE  
THE PYRAMIDS OF THE SUN AND THE MOON  
THE PYRAMID OF CHOLULA  
THE LEGEND OF THE GIANTS  
THE PYRAMID OF XOCHICALCO  
THE RUINS OF QUEMADA  
THE PYRAMID OF PAPANTLA  
CUICUILCO, THE MYSTERY CITY  
THE INVASION OF THE CHICHIMECS  
THE FOUNDING OF TENOCHTITLÁN  
THE WARRING TRIBES



### III

#### TRIBES OF THE PAST

**W**HILE the Maya-Quichés were still at the height of their civilization in the valley of the Usumacinta, long before their migration into Yucatan, there was another great kingdom, known as Xibalbay, to the north of them in the Valley of Oaxaca. Here lived the peaceful Zapotecs, who were in every respect equal to the Mayas in culture, and were undoubtedly originally part of the great Maya-Quiché race.

The Zapotec traditions and their ancient paintings indicate that they reached Oaxaca from the north, in a migration which lasted about three hundred years. This well might have been. For their wanderings may have taken them even farther north than Cholula and Teotihuacán where, some time in the very dim past, pyramids were built by a race that probably long antedated the Toltecs. The architectural planning of these famous pyramids and their unique masonry show them to be the work of some branch of the very ancient Maya-Quiché race. Finding the high plateau not to their liking, these children of the sun, the Zapotecs, may again have turned southward to the

warm sands of the Valley of Oaxaca. Their first capital here was Teotitlán—Dwelling-place of the Gods—where they remained several centuries before changing their capital to their most famous city, Mitla, the City of the Dead, the Place of Eternal Rest.

For nearly a thousand years the Zapotecs lived peacefully in the Valley of Oaxaca, reaching a stage of civilization that, in one respect at least, even surpassed that of the Mayas. This was in their religion; for at no time did the Zapotec gods demand the sacrifice of human beings. Flowers gathered beside the beautiful Atoyac River, the first ears of maize, leaves from their sacred trees, were much preferred by the peaceable Zapotec gods. Like all the primitive tribes of America, the Zapotecs worshiped the sun. He was their greatest deity, their one supreme god, known to them as Pitao, and under him were the lesser deities: the Rain-god, the Flower-goddess, the God of Volcanoes and Earthquakes, the God of Hunting and Fishing, the Goddess of Dreams, and the innumerable others.

It was the Zapotec belief in the immortality of the soul which caused them to build the elaborately decorated palaces and temples at Mitla whose ruins today are an amazing testimony of the advanced art of this peace-loving race. Mitla is from the Mexican *Mictlan*, meaning *hell*, but that word to the Indians signified merely a place of eternal rest. The original Za-

potec name, *Liovaana*, had the same meaning. The Zapotecs believed that the souls of the dead entered Eternity through the numerous caves in the Oaxaca mountains. In order that their kings and high priests might have a fit burial place, the palaces and temples of Mitla were built upon a group of caves which should be the royal gateway to the Hereafter.

The extensive ruins at Mitla have only partially been excavated. The Indians in the neighborhood believe that beneath the present flag-stoned courts are the original caverns over which the temples were built, and they claim that these contain not only the golden funeral urns of the early Zapotec kings, but great quantities of the gold and treasure of these kings as well. At the time of the Conquest the ruins of Mitla covered a vast area, but the swirling sands of the following four centuries have obliterated many of the palaces and tombs of these bygone kings. Even today, however, the Mitla ruins are among the most interesting in the world, because they stand in a class by themselves. In general architectural features they show a faint similarity to some of the Maya buildings, but in decoration they are wholly unlike any other work known. Dupaix says of the palaces: "They were erected with lavish magnificence; . . . they combine the solidity of the works of Egypt with the elegance of those of Greece. But what is most remarkable, interesting and striking in these monuments, and



which alone would be sufficient to give them the first rank among all known orders of architecture, is the execution of their mosaic reliefs."

This mosaic consists of thousands of pieces of small stone, cut with a perfect nicety and not inlaid but placed on the smooth surface of the wall to form a design in bas-relief. They are fitted together with such an exquisite knowledge of balance that no cement is required to hold them in position. In only a few cases mortar has been used. "All who have seen them speak of the perfection of the masonry, the admirable design and finish of the work, and the beauty of the decorations." The subterranean chambers, laid out in the form of a cross, with symmetric exactness, have their walls decorated with the same artistic reliefs. In the Hall of Monoliths there are six massive columns, about twenty feet high, sculptured from a solid block of porphyry and having neither base nor capital. That these and the huge stone door lintels of the palaces could have been raised into position shows the engineering skill of this ancient race.

No less remarkable were the scientifically planned fortifications built by these early Zapotecs. Monte Alban, near Oaxaca City, is a splendid example. Hills were honeycombed with tunnels, walls were carved out of solid rock, forts of such solidity were built that they stand today, a marvel of engineering and masonry. The most interesting of the fortification ruins

is the Castle of Mitla, built high on top of a precipitous hill which was accessible only on the east. The entire summit of the hill was enclosed by a wall twenty-one feet thick and eighteen feet high, hewed out of solid rock; and on the east, the vulnerable side, a double wall was placed. Within this strong palisade were all the royal buildings when the capital of the ancient Zapotec kingdom was moved from Teotitlán to Mitla.

No race believed more in preparedness than these ancient Zapotecs; perhaps that was the secret of their thousand years of peace. When at last the fierce Nahuas swept down from the north, that warlike tribe met not only with intelligently directed physical resistance but with clever propaganda as well, for the Zapotecs spread abroad the story that they were directly descended from trees and wild beasts—to indicate to the enemy the power of their resistance and the ferocity of their attack.

Toward the middle of the sixth century there appeared to the east and northeast of the Zapotecs a tribe which at first lived a wild life in the dense forests of the mountains. The Zapotecs called them in derision *Miztoquijxi*, meaning Wild Cats, and from that came their present name, Mixteca, or Mixtec. Because of their great similarity to the Zapotecs it is probable that they were a branch of that tribe, gradually separated from it because of their love of the wild life,

roaming the forests, living in caves, hunting and fishing. According to their own legends, however, the first man and woman of their tribe sprang from two enormous trees growing in a ravine near Achiutla, their capital. When these first two people saw the earth they realized it belonged to the Sun, and not knowing how else they might acquire some of it for themselves, the man challenged the Sun to a personal combat. The Sun willingly agreed; but he saw that the man had no weapons while he had his powerful rays.

Wishing to be perfectly fair, the Sun asked the Rainbow to climb into the sky, and then he told the Wind to blow down some twigs from each of the two trees that the man and woman had sprung from. The twigs from one of these trees were soft and pliable, and from them the man fashioned a bow, curving one twig like the rainbow and fastening across it another like the skyline; the twigs from the other tree were straight and stiff, and these the man used for his arrows. Now ready for the combat, he again challenged the Sun. The Sun smiled, for he knew how powerful his rays were. He sent down a weak little ray; then a stronger ray; and then he gathered together his very strongest rays and shot them straight down upon the man. But the man was a Mixtec warrior: he bravely withstood them all. When, however, the warrior shot his arrows at the Sun, it ran

and hid behind a cloud and began to moan and weep, so that there was thunder and rain upon the earth. Then the warrior knew that he had vanquished the Sun, and that the Mixtecs might have as much of the land as they desired.

Even though the Mixtecs continued to live in the mountainous regions of Oaxaca they gradually emerged from their wild state and became the equal of the Zapotecs in culture. Like the Zapotecs, they were skilled artisans, working in gold, silver and copper, while their women excelled in weaving, basket-making, and in feather-work, fashioning exquisite robes of the tiny feathers of wild birds arranged with a great beauty of color combination and striking and artistic designs. As agriculturists the Mixtecs ranked with the Zapotecs; and as hunters and warriors they were second to none. Their wild life in the mountains had taught them many things, among others a knowledge of astronomy that was equal to that of the Mayas, their calendar being almost identical with the Maya calendar except that their year began in March, when Nature herself began anew, instead of in July. The days were named for animals and plants, and a child always received the name of the day on which it was born. The religion of the Mixtecs was practically the same as that of their neighbors, the Zapotecs, their one highest god merely being called by a different name, and their road to the Hereafter being, instead

of at Mitla, in sacred caverns near Chalcatongo known as the Caves of Eternity. Here all of their kings and princes and great warriors were laid away, accompanied by quantities of food for their immediate needs and treasure to provide for their future.

During the centuries that the Maya-Quichés in Chiapas and Guatemala, and the Zapotecs and Mixtecs in Oaxaca, were making such strides in architecture, in astronomy, in metallurgy, and in general culture, there was in the valley of Mexico to the north a wholly different race, the Othomies, primitive and crude in the extreme. The Othomies stand apart from all other Indians in Mexico as the most backward, the least intelligent, for even after all the centuries of culture about them they are much the same today as they were a thousand years and more ago. They have been little affected by the influence of other tribes but have continued to live unto themselves, a race apart.

Because the Othomies are so wholly different from the other primitive tribes of Mexico, and because their legends and their first crude picture-writings make no reference to a migration, many students consider them autochthonous. But their marked Chinese type, even at the present day, and their almost-monosyllabic language indicate that their origin was somewhere in central Asia. Knowledge of the primitive Othomies, living in caves, constantly fighting, has been gained

from the pictographs of a later race; the Othomies themselves kept no records.

In far remote times when an isthmus connected Asia with the northwest corner of America, both plant and wild animal life found its way from the Old World into the New. By that same route, too, came human beings, who ventured bit by bit along the Asiatic coast, crossed the isthmus and, finding the northern climate too severe, pushed southward. Even in the centuries after the isthmus was submerged and only the Aleutian Islands remained, like stepping-stones between the two continents, other Asiatics came. But whether the first to arrive, in those thousands of years ago, found the American continent already peopled none can say. The legends of practically every tribe in Mexico claim that the first Asiatics to arrive found already in the land a race of giants; and some state that these giants were negroes.

Just when the Othomies came cannot even be conjectured. By the seventh century, however, they were well scattered over the greater part of central and northern Mexico, living their wild, wholly savage life. Gradually, as they increased in numbers and grouped together where caves were not to be had, they built crude villages, their houses being no more than straw huts or the rudest of dried-mud shelters.

At about this time the Toltecs arrived in Mexico. They had begun their migration more than a hundred



years previously from their kingdom situated somewhere in the region of the Gila River, in present-day Arizona. Centuries before that, they had reached the Gila River from a place described by them as the Kingdom of the Seven Caves. On their migration into Mexico they first moved southward and then due east, stopping for long periods of time in many places, founding cities there, and always leaving behind them, as they moved on, part of the original tribe. Their gods, speaking through the high priests, indicated when they should stop and build a town, when they should begin again their peregrinations, and in which direction they should travel. These messages the priests received through a careful study of the stars, of the flights of birds, of the time and abundance of blossoms on a certain tree which would be set aside as one of the mouthpieces of the gods, and through other natural phenomena.

The savage and warlike Othomies made this first century of Toltec occupation one of constant fighting; but the crude Othomies were no match for a race which already had made great strides in civilization; and little by little the Toltecs became masters of Anáhuac—the name, meaning Place of Much Water, which came to designate practically all of central and northern Mexico. In 713 the Toltecs found the little Othomie village of Mamení much to their liking, so they immediately took it for themselves, changed its name

to Tollán—now Tula—and spent four years in building and beautifying the city and cultivating their gardens. Their own name, Toltecs, meaning Builders, or Artisans, originated at this time, it is believed. The crude and flimsy huts of the Othomies were replaced by substantial stone and adobe buildings, marvels of well-planned architecture and solid masonry; and after four years of this labor Tollán became a worthy capital, and was destined to become one of the great cities of Anáhuac.

The gods now spoke, through Huemac, the high priest, and said that Tollán should be the center of a vast Toltec empire, and a king should immediately be chosen from the royal family of the Chichimecs—a tribe that, like the Toltecs, had originally set out from the Kingdom of the Seven Caves, and now was located to the north of Tollán. The gods were obeyed, and the first king of the Toltecs, a son of the Chichimec emperor, was crowned at Tollán in 719, beginning a Toltec dynasty which was to last for four hundred years and give way in 1116 to the Chichimecs.

The Toltecs have many legends which account for their downfall. The most popular has to do with Quetzalcoatl, the Feathered Serpent, and in many respects is similar to a legend of the Mayas. Quetzalcoatl, like Votan, was a god who appeared in the form of an old man, with white skin, gray beard, and white flowing robe. He came among the Toltecs from some-

where toward the east, and spent much of his time alone, in meditation, offering to the gods sacrifices of flowers and fruit. He preached against the sacrificing of human beings, which already was an established custom among these Indians. He taught the people many arts as yet unknown to them. So popular did this great man become that he soon was made both king and high priest at Tollán. But unfortunately there were some who clung to the old customs and beliefs, and were jealous of this strange white man who had gained such a hold over the people. Not knowing he was a god, they at last drove him from the city. He sought refuge in Cholula; but there also, after twenty years spent in good works, he was driven out, and went sadly back toward the east from whence he had come, promising his followers that some day he would return. This persecution of a god, the Toltecs believed, marked the beginning of the downfall of their empire. Four hundred years later when the Spaniards, white men, with beards, arrived from the east, the Indians believed them to be the god Quetzalcoatl and his followers returning as he had promised.

Still another popular legend claims that the Toltec downfall was directly due to the discovery of *pulque*, an intoxicating liquor made from the maguey-plant. The discoverer's daughter, a beautiful maiden, was chosen to take the first jar of pulque to the Toltec king. She remained to be his bride, and their son

was named "Child of the Maguey." At his birth the astrologers and soothsayers predicted disaster; and, true to the prophecies, the fall of the proud city of Tollán and the destruction of the Toltec nation occurred while "Child of the Maguey" was king. First there came a great rain in which millions of tiny frogs fell from the sky and devoured all the grain. The following year no rain at all fell, and drought parched the land. Scarcely had the grain begun to grow the third year when great hailstorms came and destroyed everything. The fourth year a horde of caterpillars and grasshoppers devoured the crops. There was famine throughout all the land; and following upon it came the plague. While Tollán was in this utterly weakened condition its enemies, having been watching it from all sides, marched in and the city was destroyed and deserted.

The famous pyramids at San Juan Teotihuacán, considered by some to be the work of the Toltecs, were undoubtedly constructed many centuries before this race entered the country. These pyramids, standing on a vast plain, in a direct line between two prominent distant peaks, are not unlike the pyramids of Egypt and they bear a strong similarity to the pyramidal bases of all great Maya-Quiché temples. The date of their construction is variously placed at from 5000 to 3000 B.C., but this date is wholly conjecture, for the time and reason of their building is as deeply

buried in mystery as is the race which left these monuments of its greatness.

The Pyramid of the Sun, more than two hundred feet high, and with a base-measurement of about seven hundred and fifty feet square, is built in five distinct terraces, and on the flat top there no doubt once stood an elaborately sculptured temple to the Sun-god. The Pyramid of the Moon, about a half-mile away, is similar in construction but is smaller in its dimensions, as the Moon-god could not compare in importance to the supreme deity, the great Sun-god. Both pyramids were constructed with adobe-bricks and blocks of volcanic rock, arranged in five separate layers from the center outward, as well as in five terraces from the ground upward.

About a mile from the Pyramid of the Sun is a vast quadrangular enclosure known as the Temple of Quetzalcoatl. This contains smaller pyramids which tradition states were dedicated to the stars. Buttresses help to support the walls, and a striking feature are the elaborate embellishments of strange gargoyles and barbaric symbols.

Both the Path of the Dead, flanked with close-set burial-mounds, and the Highway of the Dead, have yielded many relics in the form of sculptured stone sarcophagi, implements and ornaments of obsidian, and clay death-masks.

However many centuries may have passed since the





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### THE PYRAMID OF THE SUN

Built by an unknown race, and shrouded in mystery, it marks  
the site of an ancient Sacred City.





MITLA, THE CITY OF THE DEAD

These palace walls show the art of a race that lived  
five thousand years ago.

construction of these pyramids, when the Toltec empire was at its supremacy, Teotihuacán—which means the Habitation of the Gods—was a very sacred city to which pilgrimages were made from afar; and not only were the chief gods, the Sun and the Moon, worshiped, but even the lesser deities had their shrines or their temples here. Thousands of idols have been unearthed near the pyramids, in the fields where once a vast city stood; many of these idols are of Tlaloc, the Rain-god.

Another of the sacred cities of the Toltecs was Cholula. Its great pyramid was constructed at about the same time as the pyramids of Teotihuacán, or possibly earlier, and by the same unknown race. It shows the invariable four sides and five terraces. Neglected through the centuries, it is today covered with shrubbery, and even trees find nourishment in the layers of accumulated leaf-mold. But to the Indians it is still sacred ground, in spite of the Catholic church which has been built on its summit where once the temple to the Sun-god stood. The Indians make long pilgrimages to Cholula, climb slowly up the steep slopes of the pyramid, and stand silently, and who knows how worshipfully, in the sun on its flag-stoned top.

Every tribe in Mexico has among its traditions one regarding a great deluge which was strangely similar to the Biblical flood. In many of these traditions the flood came while the earth was still peopled with giants. Xelhua, the mythical ancestor of the Indians of

Tehuacán, was one of the few giants to survive the deluge. He escaped merely because, being on a mountain-top, he had fallen asleep on a fleecy cloud and had been carried off to the heaven of the Rain-god, Tlaloc. There he remained until the waters subsided and then, returning to earth on another cloud, he immediately set about building a tower that should reach to heaven, so that in case of another deluge he could climb to safety. Also, it might be convenient to go up and visit in heaven occasionally when earth grew wearisome. When at last the tower had grown to a great height, the Sky-gods became angry with this mortal who was attempting to enter their paradise. Lightning-bolts were hurled down, and the tower fell. Once more, however, Xelhua built it up until it almost reached the sky. This time the gods hurled down a magic green stone which destroyed it; and when the giant again rebuilt it, a huge green toad hopped down from heaven, knocking over the tower and so frightening Xelhua that he never again attempted to rebuild it. All that remained still stands to this day as the pyramid of Cholula, the Indians claim.

The same unknown race who built the pyramids of Teotihuacán and Cholula built also, perhaps, the great temple to the Sun-god at Xochicalco, about eighteen miles from Cuernavaca. On this "Hill of the Flowers" the ruins of a five-terraced pyramid, constructed of huge blocks of porphyry and beautifully sculptured,

form the base of a great sun-temple about sixty feet square. Both in architecture and in sculptural design there is no doubting the strong Maya-Quiché influence. Subterranean chambers and underground passages add a peculiar interest to the pyramid of Xochicalco.

The ruins of Quemada, "The Burned Place," have been well preserved in the dry, rarefied air of the mountains of Zacatecas. Temples, dwellings, and communal storehouses, built of stone and a cement made of clay and cornhusks, show that an enlightened people lived here in the long ago, although this mystery city is believed to antedate even Xochicalco.

About fifty miles north of Jalapa, and buried in dense jungle, is the Pyramid of Papantla, built probably by the same unknown race that built the pyramids at San Juan Teotihuacán and Cholula. The Pyramid of Papantla is called by the nearby natives *Tajin*, or Thunderbolt, from their belief that the ancient race who builded it was destroyed by an angry Sky-god. The base of the pyramid is exactly square, each side measuring eighty-two feet, and it faces precisely the cardinal points. There are the inevitable five terraces; and a stairway leads to the summit where once stood the temple to the Sun-god. The pyramid, about sixty feet high, is built of immense blocks of porphyry placed together with mortar and smothered with hieroglyphics—human figures, crocodiles, leopards, turtles, and many other pagan symbols. Notable features of

this pyramid are 366 square nichès, believed to have been somehow connected with the days of the year, as both the Maya and the Toltec calendars were computed to this exactness.

Just outside of Mexico City, near San Angel, the ruins of Cuicuilco are being made to give up their secret as the lava-rock covering is torn away and the ancient buildings are brought to light. This buried city may be the oldest of all the ruins in North America. It shows evidences of having been built eight thousand or more years ago; and its splendid pyramid, five-terraced and four-squared, may have given inspiration to a later race to build the great pyramids at San Juan Teotihuacán. For some undreamed-of reason Cuicuilco, with all its splendors, was deserted by the people who lived there in comparative luxury perhaps 6000 B.C. Through the following centuries sand and rock and decaying vegetation buried the city fifteen feet or more. And then, untold centuries ago, there came a tremendous volcanic eruption, perhaps from the crater of Ajusco or Xitli, and a flow of lava covered this already buried city and the surrounding country with twenty to fifty feet of ashes and stone. Today this vast ragged sea of hardened lava, two and a half miles wide by six miles long, is called the Pedregal, "Stony Place," or Malpais, "Bad Lands." It is crisscrossed with a labyrinth of irregular channels edged with sharp black rock; and hidden away in its forbidding recesses



are innumerable caves, some of them, it is claimed, holding the hidden treasure of the Aztecs.

At about the time the pyramids of Teotihuacán were built, Guanajuato, "Hill of the Frogs," was the home of a tribe who left behind it, among other evidences of its sojourn, a huge stone frog, beautifully chiseled. This the Chichimecs, having no idol, and no ability to carve one, took for their god when they came into the country many centuries later.

In the days of the Toltecs, when Cholula and Teotihuacán both were important religious centers, the Chichimecs, from whom the first Toltec ruler had been chosen, were well established a little to the north of the Toltec empire. And as the centuries passed and the capital at Tollán grew in importance and magnificence, the Chichimecs began secretly planning to march upon the city, subjugate the Toltecs, and themselves rule over all of Anáhuac. Then one day spies brought the astounding news that much of the Toltec country was deserted and Tollán itself in ruins. The Chichimecs swarmed by the thousands into the now abandoned territory. Part of the tribe was left at Tollán to rebuild the city while others pushed on until they came to the caves about Lake Xaltocán. Here they settled, and in 1120 founded Tenayocán, later moving their capital to the foot of the mountains of Tezcuco.

The Chichimec civilization was much inferior to that



of the Toltecs. While they worshiped the Sun-god, the Moon-god, and the Earth-dragon, they had neither temples nor idols, except for the ancient frog they found in Guanajuato. Their intermingling with the scattered Toltecs had its effect upon them, but by the time they began to be appreciably influenced by Toltec culture, a wholly new era began in Anáhuac, brought about by the arrival of seven other tribes. These later were known as the Xochimilcans, Chalcans, Tepanecs, Acolhuans, Tlahuicans, Tlascaltecs, and Aztecs or Mexicans. They had begun their migration from Aztlán—the exact location of which is still undecided—and had traveled together as far as the Seven Caves. This was not the original Kingdom of the Seven Caves, which was their home many, many centuries earlier in their history and from which the Toltecs also had come.

At the Seven Caves, according to the most famous Aztec legend, the gods appeared to this tribe and told them that they were chosen to be a great people. They should break away from the others—some versions say the other tribes already had gone and the Aztecs alone were left at the Seven Caves—and push southward, founding their capital at a spot which the gods would point out by having an eagle perch upon a cactus and hold a serpent in its beak. Greatly elated to be thus the favored of the gods, the Aztecs set out, sending scouts ahead to seek for the sign which should indicate

the center of their empire. Far and wide they searched, as they moved ever southward. And then, in the marshy land about Lake Tezcucó, the site was found. For two of the Indian scouts saw an eagle swoop down out of the sky, snatch up a snake from among the reeds, and settle upon a nopal-cactus growing on a stone in the midst of the water. Here, perched upon the cactus, with the serpent in his beak, the eagle prepared to enjoy his meal. Surely it was the sign of the gods!

One of the Indians rushed forward to capture the eagle and was drowned in the attempt, but the other hastened back with the tidings. And there, in the midst of this marsh, the Aztecs founded their great city of Tenochtitlán, which is today the City of Mexico. Causeways had to be built, dykes to hold back the overflowing lake, canals to regulate the water, and the houses built on piles driven into the mud. But what mattered that: it was the site chosen by the gods. This emblem, the eagle holding a serpent and perched upon a cactus, is now the national seal of Mexico.

The Aztecs and the remaining six tribes who, leaving the Seven Caves at different times and traveling over different routes, had arrived in Anáhuac during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, were permitted to occupy Chichimec territory under conditions which kept them subject to the Chichimecs. During the next two centuries these various tribes were constantly at war,

the Aztecs all the while growing stronger and more powerful.

In 1409 Ixtlixóchitl became king of the Chichimecs. A ruler of one of the smaller tribes refused to recognize his coronation, and in the war that promptly resulted Ixtlixóchitl not only was victorious but he magnanimously pardoned all of his enemies. That was most unusual, for it was customary to offer up as sacrifices to the gods all captives taken in battle. Ixtlixóchitl had reason to regret his generosity; for those same enemies soon turned upon him, and defeated him, and Ixtlixóchitl had to flee to the forests to hide himself. Knowing that his capture was certain, he first secreted his little son, Nezahualcóyotl, in the midst of a leafy bush, and then proudly gave himself up, and was cruelly murdered in sight of the little boy watching from his hiding-place. The conqueror then had himself crowned king of the Chichimecs, and put a price upon the head of little Nezahualcóyotl, the rightful heir to the Chichimec throne. The city of Tezcuco, the Chichimec capital, was given to the Aztecs—the Mexicans—for their aid in the war.

Nezahualcóyotl, whose name means Hungry Coyote, wandered forlornly about the forests, not daring to show himself; until at last, by the treachery of an old woman, he fell into the hands of his enemies and was taken before the king of the Chalcans. He was condemned to be quartered alive at the next religious fes-

tival. This terrible death Nezahualcóyotl escaped through one of the most heroic acts ever recorded. One of his friends, Quetlamaca, knowing full well what his fate would be, entered the prison through a ruse, changed clothes with Nezahualcóyotl, and was quartered alive in his stead.

For four more years, then, the young Chichimec prince wandered about the forests, hiding in caves, living on wild fruits; and then the Mexicans interceded for him and by making many costly gifts to the tyrant king Tezozomac obtained pardon for the young prince on the condition that, under pain of death, he would never leave the Mexican capital of Tenochtitlán. Two years later he was granted permission to go as far as Tezcuco, to live in one of his own palaces.

But Nezahualcóyotl never had forgotten the brutal murder of his father, Ixtlixóchitl, nor his own hunted life in the forests; he merely was biding his time. Now, in the comparative freedom of his own palace at Tezcuco, he began secretly to negotiate with neighboring tribes and arrange a league against the tyrant Tezozomac. This cruel king soon died, however, leaving the stolen throne of the Chichimecs to his second son. But the oldest son, Maxtla, lost no time in murdering this younger brother and proclaiming himself king. Maxtla's next step was to murder the king of the Mexicans and declare himself ruler of that tribe as well. But the Mexicans, aghast at this cruelty,

wanted none of him. At the suggestion of Motecuhzoma, the commander of their army, they eagerly joined Nezahualcóyotl's secret league to suppress the tyranny of which they all were more than weary. The cruel Maxtla, who had murdered two kings and stolen two thrones, was hunted down in his palace and dragged forth, and Nezahualcóyotl himself killed him, offering his still-warm heart to the spirit of the Hungry Coyote's father, Ixtlixóchitl.

Peace was not yet, however. For the Tepanecs and the Acolhuans, fearing the alliance between Nezahualcóyotl and the powerful Mexicans, banded together and marched upon the Hungry Coyote's capital at Tezcucó. For two years the war dragged along, and then came the final victory, and Nezahualcóyotl was himself, in 1431, crowned king of Tezcucó and of all the Chichimec-Tepanec principalities, his coronation taking place in Tenochtitlán amid elaborate ceremonies.

Nezahualcóyotl was a great ruler, a great philosopher, and a great poet. Only two of his writings have been preserved, but these show the intellect and ideals of the man whom all historians compare to King David. During his forty years' reign he established schools and colleges, and encouraged instruction in the arts and sciences, making of Tezcucó a great educational center; he constructed palaces and temples of much beauty and magnificence; he had the city protected by dykes and irrigation canals, and he furthered

the building of public roads and bridges and elaborate defensive works. Also, he discouraged human sacrifice and dedicated a temple to the Unknown God.

Soon after his coronation in 1431 the entire Chichimec-Tepanec territory was divided into three kingdoms, each independent yet all allied. The smallest, the Tepanec kingdom, with its capital at Tlacopán, was to receive one-fifth of all tributes or booty taken in war; the Acolhuacán, with its capital at Tezcucó, was to receive two-fifths; and the Aztec or Mexican, with its capital at Tenochtitlán, was to have two-fifths. This alliance was still in existence when the Spaniards arrived nearly a hundred years later.





## IV. THE CONQUEST

CÓRDOBA'S DISCOVERY OF YUCATAN  
THE EXPLOITS OF GRIJALVA  
THE COMING OF CORTÉS  
THE GIFTS OF MONTEZUMA  
VILLA RICA DE LA VERA CRUZ  
THE MARCH TO THE INTERIOR  
THE RUSE OF THE TLASCALANS  
THE CHOLULA MASSACRE  
THE GOLDEN CITY OF THE AZTECS  
TROUBLE IN VERA CRUZ  
SPANISH GREED  
THE TRAPPED CAMP  
"LA NOCHE TRISTE"  
UNEXPECTED AID  
THE SIEGE OF MEXICO  
THE END OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE



## IV THE CONQUEST

**T**WENTY-FIVE years after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus one of the most important colonies in the New World was on the island of Cuba, with Diego de Velázquez as its governor. Velázquez, himself an adventurer, had been sent to Cuba to subjugate the natives, and among the picked desperadoes and sea-rovers who sailed with him was a young scapegrace named Hernando Cortés, noted for his fearlessness and for an insatiable thirst for adventure. When Velázquez had taken possession of Cuba and had been appointed its governor, he chose Cortés, a youth after his own heart, for his secretary.

Many colonists from Spain were attracted to this beautiful and fertile island, and among them were numerous adventurers who had been lured to the New World solely by tales of the fabulous wealth that awaited them in the land where gold and jewels were so plentiful. But in Cuba they found only work. The soil needed to be tilled, houses needed to be built. That was no life for a sea-rover while perhaps other islands, unknown and therefore luring, lay to the west.

Hernandez de Córdoba, one of these adventurers, gathered together a hundred daring men, obtained the necessary permission of Governor Velázquez, and set sail in 1517 to see what he might find. The little expedition of three small boats steered a westerly course, but a sudden hurricane arose, and while the men battled against the storm they were drifting ever southward. At last, after many days, they came in sight of land. It was the northern coast of Yucatan. But the country they saw appeared so desolate, only sand and beach-grass and a few wind-tossed palms, and the natives so unfriendly, that they lingered only long enough to name the point Cape Catoche. Sailing westward, then, for another fifteen days, they saw ahead of them what they believed to be a veritable paradise. Curved about a beautiful bay, with the sands of the beach golden-yellow in the foreground and the shore fringed with cocoanut-palms, an Indian village was all but smothered by luxuriant vegetation that ran back as far as the eye could reach. Surely this was the land of wealth and plenty for which they had set sail. The Indians called their town Campeche. They flocked down to the beach to watch the strange men land and to marvel at their boats. They were friendly enough to Córdoba and his men; but there was little gold in evidence, so the Spaniards lingered only a few days.

Taking with him two Campeche Indians to train as interpreters, Córdoba continued along the coast until

he came to another beautiful bay. Here, too, the Indians appeared friendly; but it was only simulated friendship. No sooner had the Spaniards landed than a rain of poisoned arrows fell upon them, and they had to fly quickly to their boats. More than half of Córdoba's men were killed, and one of the boats was destroyed. Córdoba, himself wounded, returned to Cuba with the remnant of his men and shortly afterward died from the wound he had received from a poisoned arrow.

The Cubans were little interested in the fate of the expedition; but they listened eagerly to tales the survivors had to tell about the land they had visited. And at each telling these tales became more marvelous, the fabulous wealth of the land assumed gigantic proportions, and the trouble with the Indians was all but forgotten. Yucatan, which actually they had found too barren in appearance to tempt them to linger, was described as a place of luxuriant vegetation, of luscious fruits, of natives who wore jewel-embroidered gowns and ate from golden dishes.

Even Governor Velázquez paid heed. What honor might not he bring to himself by acquiring this golden land for Spain? At once he sent out a second expedition, this time of four boats and two hundred and forty men under Juan de Grijalva, with the same pilot who had accompanied Córdoba, and the two Campeche Indians for interpreters. On this expedition



went many soldier-adventurers who later figured prominently in Mexico's history—Pedro de Alvarado, Francisco de Montejo, Alonzo de Ayila, Bernal Díaz de Castillo, and many others.

On May 2, 1518, they arrived at the island of Cozumel, about thirty miles off the east coast of Yucatan. There they found nothing of especial interest, beyond the strange religious ceremonies of the natives, so they lost no time in sailing northward for the peninsula of Yucatan, the land of gold and plenty about which they had heard such marvelous tales. Rounding Cape Catoche, they searched in vain for the luxuriant vegetation so graphically described by Córdoba's men, but finding only dreary sands they continued along the coast until they came to the Bay of Champotan. This indeed was a beautiful inlet, and here Grijalva landed two hundred of his men; but he was immediately set upon by a large force of Indians and had to retreat in all haste to his boats.

Continuing along the coast, they landed next at the mouth of the Tabasco River, which was named by them the Grijalva. Here, through their interpreters and through the eloquent medium of glass-bead presents, friendly relations were established with the natives; but there was little gold to be seen, so the adventurers remained only a few days. Grijalva took possession of the country, however, and called it New

Spain; and this name later came to apply to all of present-day Mexico.

Sailing still farther along the coast, the Spaniards woke one morning to see the beautiful snow-capped peak of Orizaba, flooded with crimson sunrise and crowned with a halo of gold-bright clouds. They came to the mouth of a river which they called *Banderas* because of the fluttering of many flags as the natives marched down in a great procession to watch them land. The Indians here, too, proved friendly, and the Spaniards had the satisfaction of trading a few cheap mirrors and glass beads for great quantities of gold. After six pleasant days here, Grijalva again set sail, and discovered two small islands not far from a broad beach on the mainland which the natives called Chalchiucúcan and which is today the site of Vera Cruz. One of these islands was named *Isla de los Sacrificios* because of the great number of human beings who were carried there to be sacrificed to the Indian gods.

Here the natives were wearing many gold ornaments, and the Spaniards wished at once to explore the interior of the mainland, to reach the source of this great wealth. Grijalva was quite willing to do so; but first his boats must be left under guard in a convenient place, so that hasty retreat would not be impossible should it prove necessary. Seeing a small island a short distance from the shore, he immediately took his fleet there, and called the island *San Juan*,

in honor of the saint whose day it was, and *Ulúa*, a word the Indians used repeatedly when asked why they sacrificed human beings. But instead of leaving the boats at San Juan de Ulúa and exploring the mainland, Grijalva, overjoyed with the success of his expedition so far, suddenly returned to Cuba, with his cargo of gold and his tales of the marvelous country he had visited. To the highly colored account of his own adventures were added stories that the natives had told him of a great and vastly wealthy kingdom that lay somewhere in the interior, a country ruled by a king whose subjects looked upon him as a god, and whose name was Motecuhzoma.

With Grijalva's tales of the fabulously wealthy land exceeding even the wild stories told by Córdoba, the excitement in Cuba knew no bounds. Velázquez immediately sent to Spain for permission to subjugate and colonize the new land; and then, without waiting the many weeks for a reply, he began making his plans for a new and larger expedition. Unable himself to leave Cuba, he looked about among his followers for just the right man to put in command of so important an enterprise, and his choice fell upon his secretary, Hernando Cortés, Grijalva being at the time out of favor for not having left a colony himself in the land of New Spain.

There was no difficulty in getting volunteers. Of the many eager to join the expedition, three hundred

soldier-adventurers were selected by Cortés in Santiago alone. They were well equipped; boats were got in readiness; and Cortés was the envy of all Cuba. Then there came a whispered rumor that Velázquez planned to recall his secretary and place another in command, for he feared that Cortés might take to himself too much of the glory if he should succeed in the conquest.

It was merely the thread of a rumor that reached Cortés. But he waited to hear no more. Secretly embarking his soldiers by night, and putting on board such munitions and food as he could get together, he raised his anchors and stole away from Santiago, hoping to get further provisions and men in Trinidad. This he did; for many crossbowmen and musketeers flocked to his standard, and he was able to add to his military supplies a quantity of muskets and ammunition and even some small cannons.

Cortés had a magnetic personality and a fluent tongue. No one could resist his ardent pleas. He not only pictured to his men the great wealth of the new land to which they were going, and the huge earthly rewards that would be their portion, but he aroused their religious zeal by declaring that the main object of the conquest was to teach the thousands of pagan Indians the True Religion and plant the cross of Christ among them.

Returning to Havana for his final preparations,

after having made temporary peace with Velázquez, Cortés set sail on February 10, 1519, for his great adventure in the land of gold. He commanded a squadron of eleven boats, manned by one hundred and nine seamen. There were five hundred and eight soldiers, two hundred Indian men and women for carriers, sixteen horses, and the two Campeche interpreters, Julian and Melchor. In one of the boats was Bernal Díaz, who had accompanied both Córdoba and Grijalva on their expeditions, and who afterward gained fame as the historian of Mexico in the days of the conquest.

The squadron steered its course for the island of Cozumel. When Cortés' flagship arrived some of the boats had preceded it. Alvarado had been there for three days. And in that time he had sacked a temple and so terrified the natives that they had fled to the interior. Cortés was given his first opportunity to show that iron hand of the ruler and that foresight and diplomacy which carried him through all the exciting months of the conquest to eventual victory. He publicly reprimanded Alvarado, and through the interpreters made peace with the natives. Thus he learned from them that on the mainland, near Catoche, there were two Spaniards who had been shipwrecked there years before and, never hoping to see their compatriots again, had thrown in their lot with the Maya Indians.

Partly for humanitarian reasons, no doubt, and partly because Cortés was astute enough to realize the value of these two men, with their knowledge of the Maya Indians and the Maya language, he sent one of his trusted captains, Ordaz, in search of them. While waiting at Cozumel, he had the Maya idols in a temple destroyed, and placed in their stead an image of the Virgin Mary and a cross. His bishop, Juan Díaz, then celebrated mass in the presence of the wondering natives.

Ordaz returned with no word of the shipwrecked Spaniards, and Cortés, in disgust at the delay, prepared to leave the island. But although Ordaz could get no word from the Indians about the two Spaniards, runners hastily carried word to Catoche about the white men who had landed on Cozumel, and just as Cortés was raising his anchors, one of the shipwrecked Spaniards, Jerónimo de Aguilar, arrived in a canoe and became a valuable addition to Cortés' army. The other man had preferred to remain among the Mayas.

From Cozumel the squadron rounded Yucatan and proceeded to Tabasco, dropping anchor at the mouth of the Grijalva River late one evening. The next morning the Spaniards were startled to see the shores of the river lined with thousands of Indians, drawn up in battle array, their weapons gleaming, their hostility unmistakable. A few musket shots from the squadron brought a rain of arrows; but they did little



damage, as the Spaniards were protected by quilted cotton or by steel armor. And a few roars of their cannons put the Indians completely to rout, for that terrible thunder could be nothing but the voice of an angry War-god who had come to hurl destruction upon them. The white men, they believed, were supernatural beings, and their muskets were snakes trained to spit fire at their bidding.

Cortés marched inland the following day, and his army met with little resistance, for the natives fled in terror. But Melchor, one of the two Indian interpreters Córdoba had carried off to Cuba, now back home again in his own land, turned traitor and not only deserted the Spaniards outright but told the Tabascans how few white men there really were, and explained away their fear and awe of the muskets and cannons. This was great news to the Indians. They had no desire to anger the gods; but mortals they were not afraid to fight. Thus during the night the caciques sent out their runners and once more gathered together the Tabascans by the thousands; and the following day, March 25, the greatest battle the Spaniards yet had fought took place on the plains of Tabasco.

Cortés, with five hundred well-equipped and well-armored men and six cannons, faced an army of between twenty and thirty thousand Indians. His victory against these stupendous odds he owed largely

to his cannons, which mowed down the Tabascans by the hundreds and filled their army with terror in spite of Melchor's explanations. But an even greater fear was caused by the sight of the horses, which Melchor had forgotten to mention. Horses were wholly unknown to the natives. They believed that horse and rider were some strange creature, half man, half beast, which the gods had sent to trample them under foot and then to devour them. Horse and rider must indeed have made a strange spectacle, both fully armored in shining steel that flashed and glittered as the sun shone on it. The armor, the Indians believed, was part of the creature, like the shells of the huge turtles with which they were familiar.

With the cannons roaring in front, and the horses stampeding in the rear, the Tabascan chiefs hastily sued for peace, sending, as was the custom, many presents to the Great White Chief. Cortés agreed solely on condition that the natives give up their heathen worship, and there and then accept the Catholic Faith. It must have seemed a strange request to the natives, who were accustomed to grant no quarter to a conquered army, taking the captives for sale into slavery or for sacrifice on the altars of their gods. They readily consented to change their religion, for was not the roar of the cannons the voice of their gods telling them they should do so? And there, on the battlefield, with the dead and the dying all about

them, a cross was set up, an altàr erected, an image of the Virgin placed upon it, and Fray Bartolomé de Olmedo celebrated the first mass on the continent.

Among the gifts which the Tabascan chiefs presented to Cortés were twenty women slaves. These were distributed among his captains, Cortés keeping for himself the beautiful Marina, or Malinche. Marina was the daughter of an Aztec chief. At his death her heartless mother, wanting the girl out of the way, sold her into slavery, and so she had come to the Tabascans. Thus she could speak her native Mexican or Aztec tongue, and the Maya; and the shipwrecked Aguilar could speak Maya and Spanish. As both an interpreter and a friend, Marina was invaluable to Cortés.

From Tabasco the Spaniards continued along the coast until they came to the island of San Juan de Ulúa; and there Cortés received the first ambassadors from Motecuhzoma, popularly Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico.

When, a year previously, Grijalva had landed on that same coast, Indian runners had carried the startling news to Montezuma, and the superstitious Aztec had believed that the white men were the ancient Toltec god Quetzalcoatl and his followers who had returned to take possession of the country in accordance with the prophecy. To forestall so dire a calamity only one thing could be done—a Holy War

must be waged in order to secure captives whose dripping blood would appease the angry War-god. Hundreds of prisoners were sacrificed, their hearts cut out of their living bodies and laid upon the altar of the terrible Huitzilopochtli; and apparently the great god was indeed appeased, for Grijalva and his men turned their boats toward the east and sailed back into the sunrise out of which they had come.

And now, once again, runners brought word to Montezuma that Quetzalcoatl and his followers were in Tabasco, with strange War-monsters that trampled the Indians under foot, and great War-dogs that barked thunder and bit with fire and lightning. This army, with its supernatural beings, was even now on its way to Ulúa, and from thence to the very heart of the Aztec empire.

This was dire news indeed. Montezuma quickly called in his astrologers and necromancers; but they merely foretold the downfall of the great Aztec empire; and for this disturbing prophecy they were promptly quartered alive. Another Holy War was then begun in all haste, and the hearts of hundreds of Tlascalan captives were offered to the insatiable War-god. But Huitzilopochtli seemed not so easily appeased this time; for word came that an immense army of Tabascans had been defeated by a mere handful of these strange white men. Further captives were sacrificed; but without avail; and the high priests told

Montezuma that the white chieftain was indeed the god Quetzalcoatl and it were better not to anger him but to propitiate him by sending costly gifts, so that he would not bring destruction upon the country but, well pleased with his friendly reception, would leave them a blessing and return to his own land beyond the seas.

And so it was that when Cortés landed at San Juan de Ulúa, two ambassadors from Montezuma came to him laden with presents—ornaments wrought in gold and precious stones, robes of exquisite featherwork, and quantities of rich cloth embroidered with threads of pure gold. But, far from turning the Spaniards back to their homeland, the sight of this treasure made them more eager than ever to push inland to the wealthy kingdom of the Aztecs. And so the messengers were returned to their emperor with a few trinkets, including a Spanish helmet which they admired, and with word that, having come so far, the white men could scarcely return to their own king without first seeking an audience with so great a ruler as Montezuma.

Cortés and his men then landed on the mainland—on Good Friday, April 22, 1519—and at once set about building a fortified camp on a small hill rising back of the broad beach. The few cannons were placed in advantageous positions for defense, and a huge cross was erected in the very center of the camp,





*Photo., F. I. F.*

ORIZABA, "THE STAR MOUNTAIN"

Across fields of green and hills of changing blue rises the  
snow-white peak, the highest in North America except  
Mount McKinley in Alaska.





*Copyright, Burton Holmes*

ON THE WAY TO TEOTIHUACÁN

Herds of sheep or goats add a picturesque touch to all the main highways.

for Cortés sincerely believed that the main object of the conquest was to spread the Catholic religion among the pagan natives. The place was then named *Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz*—Rich Village of the True Cross.

On Easter Sunday the cacique of the friendly natives around them came with many rich presents; and a few days later another deputation arrived from Montezuma. Two nobles were sent this time, followed by a hundred men bearing costly gifts of gold and silver jewelry set with precious stones, cloth of gold, ropes of pearls, robes embroidered with hummingbird feathers, and the Spanish helmet filled to the brim with nuggets of pure gold. They delivered, also, a message from Montezuma. The Emperor deeply regretted that the Children of the Sun could not visit him, but he would not think of permitting them to cross the dangerous mountains and the treacherous lakes to reach his kingdom. To show his friendship, he sent these few insignificant presents and wished them a speedy voyage back to the Rising Sun.

The truth is that Montezuma was racked with uncertainty. If these white beings were merely men, as some of his runners believed, he easily could sweep upon them with his mighty army and annihilate them. But what if they were gods? Surely it were better not to antagonize them. And so he waited in a fever

of terror and anxiety for word that the strangers, be they men or gods, had departed from his shores.

But the sight of so much gold—gold collars set with jewels, gold animals with emerald eyes, gold idols of Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc, and above all the helmet filled with nuggets—inflamed the Spaniards anew to reach this land of such incredible wealth. So word was returned to Montezuma that, after the dangers of so long a voyage by water, a few hundred leagues by land would be as nothing to the white men. Therefore they would soon set out to pay their respects to the great Emperor.

Then, seeing the messengers busy drawing pictures of the Spaniards and their boats—that was their method of carrying accurate “written” information back to their ruler—Cortés decided to give Montezuma some idea of his might. Accordingly he called out his entire army, completely equipped in their glittering armor and quilted shields, and had them march in review before the amazed natives. The long lines of well-drilled infantry, the sun gleaming on their armor, their spears and muskets flashing, made a formidable spectacle. But they were as nothing to the cavalry, with man and horse completely armored and appearing as one strange, supernatural being. There were sixteen of these unheard-of creatures, and as they charged and maneuvered, the terrified natives fled for shelter. But even the cavalry were as nothing

to the cannons, which roared like a thousand demons let loose, and caused a fountain of sand to spout up where the shell struck on the beach.

When Montezuma saw these drawings and heard the startling tales his ambassadors told, he was more than ever determined that, men or gods, this powerful army must not be permitted to come to his capital. For at last he was beginning to believe the prophecy of the astrologers, that the arrival of the white men meant the end of the Aztec empire. Accordingly, further gifts were sent in all haste to Cortés, with a message that plainly showed the Spaniard that Montezuma was afraid of him. But these ambassadors, like all the others, were sent back, without encouragement, to their Emperor.

And now a strange thing happened at Vera Cruz. All the Indians disappeared. No more food was brought to the Spaniards by friendly natives. Starvation threatened the camp; and, added to that, many were dying of fever, while all were suffering from the excessive heat. Thus mutiny followed, for many clamored to return to Cuba with what treasure they had. But to the indomitable leader retreat was something wholly unknown; so once more he called his fluent words into play and with his own courage brought new hope into the hearts of his men. He then moved his camp of Vera Cruz to a more healthful site; and, disclaiming all further relations with Veláz-

quez, Governor of Cuba, was himself appointed by his followers civil and military commander, responsible only to the King of Spain.

Soon after this the neighboring Totonacs, of Cempoalla, who were vassals of Montezuma and suffering under his tyranny, made friendly overtures to Cortés; and by a bit of clever strategy on the part of the Spanish leader this tribe became his staunch allies.

But while Cortés was twelve miles away in Cempoalla, more trouble was brewing in the Spanish camp. For a plot was afoot to seize the boats and return to Cuba in the absence of the leader. Fortunately, word of the mutiny reached Cortés. Strenuous measures were called for here; and only a man with the dauntless spirit of this Crusader could have conceived, much less actually have executed, so drastic a step as now was taken. All of the boats, except one small one kept for fishing, were completely destroyed, and so there was now no link with Cuba and home, no turning backward from these unfriendly shores, no choice but to follow the determined leader.

At last, on August 6, 1519, Cortés set out from Cempoalla on the first lap of his march to the Mexican capital, with four hundred and fifty Spaniards, sixteen horses, six cannons, and thirteen hundred Totonac allies, including forty chieftains. As the amazing army swept onward and upward toward the plateau

of Anáhuac, passing Indian villages, the wondering natives rushed out to watch it go by, but no resistance was offered. And so, after many days, they came to the city of Xocotla, which lay near the boundary of the mighty republic of Tlascala. Of all the tribes in Anáhuac the Tlascalans alone had successfully resisted the army of Montezuma and remained independent. But because of the many Aztec attempts to subjugate them, and the many Tlascalans who had been carried off to be sacrificed to the terrible Huitzilopochtli, the Tlascalans were the bitter enemies of the Mexicans. Cortés was doubly eager, therefore, to make an ally of this powerful tribe. Four of the Totonac chiefs were sent with a friendly request that the Spaniards be permitted to pass through Tlascala on their march to the capital of the Aztecs.

The Tlascalans were torn with uncertainty. If this strange white army were indeed invincible, as all runners had reported, then the Tlascalans were eager to ally themselves with them and join in the spoils to be taken in the golden capital of the Aztecs. But if, on the other hand, these white men were only mortals like themselves, the Tlascalan warriors easily could defeat them, and there might be a good deal of booty to be had from so well-equipped an army. But how could the Tlascalans determine this question without committing themselves? One of their chiefs suggested a plan whereby the gods might decide for them. On



the Tlascalan frontier were their allies, the Othomies. What better than first to try the power of these white strangers by setting an Othomie army upon them? If the Othomies were victorious, then the Tlascalans could rush in and so share in the spoils. If the Othomies should be defeated, the Tlascalans could disclaim all responsibility and still protest friendship for the invincible Children of the Sun. In the meantime they would hold the Totonac chiefs, awaiting developments.

Thus it was that when Cortés, too impatient to wait longer for a reply to his message, once more took up the march and, rounding a mountain spur on August 31, came upon the Great Wall of Tlascala, he found it unguarded and so passed into the country of the most warlike of all the tribes of Anáhuac. In a brief skirmish between a few Spaniards who had been sent on a foraging expedition and the Othomies, the white men were routed. That decided the Tlascalans. The Children of the Sun were not gods: the Othomies had defeated them.

And so the following day Cortés' army came suddenly upon a large body of warriors and was instantly in a deluge of arrows and stones. With his famous war-cry, "Santiago and at them!" Cortés dashed forward. The Tlascalans, being but a decoy, retreated backward through a narrow pass, and the Spaniards, exulting in so easy a victory, dashed after them. Too late they discovered the ruse, for they emerged upon

a vast plain and saw spread out before them an army of at least one hundred thousand Indians. In all their war-paint, their bright-feathered costumes, and their plumed shields and helmets, they made such an array as the white men never before had seen. For a moment terror was in the Spanish hearts, for it seemed impossible that their small force could withstand this mighty army. But once more they heard "Santiago and at them!" and the battle was on. All day it raged. The Tlascalan phalanxes, fighting always in close ranks, would roll up like a mighty sea; the Spanish cannons and muskets would mow them down by the hundreds and the Spanish cavalry trample them; against this quick destruction the Tlascalans would roll back; only to close ranks and surge forward once more; and again be mowed down. Unfortunately for Cortés, one of his horses, which caused such terror among the natives, was killed, and a quick-witted chief had its flesh cut up and passed among his men, to show that it was not a supernatural or magic being but only mortal and not to be feared.

When evening came, the Tlascalans withdrew, leaving on the field—if we may believe the historian Bernal Díaz who himself took part in the engagement—thirty thousand dead, while the Spaniards had lost but one man killed. Nearly every Spaniard had been wounded, however, and they were so utterly worn out that they dropped upon the ground where they were,

without even erecting their tents. The night was bitterly cold; and, wounded and bruised, cold and completely exhausted, many of the men begged to return to their homes; for all the gold in Mexico seemed to them then less desirable than rest and peace in sunny Cuba. But Cortés, the man with the magic tongue, again appealed to their religious ardor and in an impassioned speech reminded them of the glory that would be theirs if they should succeed in converting to the True Faith this nation of idol-worshippers. Thus the men, forgetting their discomforts, were inspired anew by their leader's own magnetic courage and high faith.

Mercifully they had one day of respite; and then again the Tlascalán army was in the field, this time in even greater numbers, and only a combination of circumstances saved the Spanish troops from complete annihilation. A charge of the cavalry still spread terror, for the Indians could not believe those strange armored creatures were not War-monsters from the gods. The cannons were even more terrifying; for only a supernatural War-demon could howl such thunder and spit such destruction, mowing wide swaths in their ranks. And then, perhaps the deciding factor, the Tlascalán chiefs disagreed among themselves and some of them withdrew their entire forces, leaving the native army so weakened that at last it surrendered, believing itself deserted by the Tlascalán gods. And

what a surprise awaited the defeated army! Instead of being made captives and offered up as sacrifices on the altars of the white men's gods, the Tlascalans were forgiven, and treated as brothers!

This powerful tribe could be as stanch friends as they were relentless enemies. Cortés and his weary army were escorted by them in great state to their capital city of Tlascala, the Spanish wounded were cared for, the sick attended to, and the entire army banqueted and treated as honored guests.

What must have been Montezuma's dismay when he learned through his spies that even the warlike Tlascalans, whom his mighty army and all their allies could never subdue, were now on their knees before these unconquerable Children of the Sun. But even greater was his alarm when he learned that the Tlascalans had allied themselves with the Spaniards and had offered Cortés their entire army, if he wished it, in any expedition against their hated enemies, the Mexicans. The crafty Montezuma felt it high time for him to change his attitude and extend a hearty welcome to the strangers, since they must indeed be gods—and since he felt convinced that nothing could stop them from arriving in Tenochtitlán anyway. Accordingly the Spanish captain now received further gifts from the great Emperor and a cordial invitation to visit Mexico.

With his army well rested, and now increased by

six thousand Tlascalan warriors, carefully chosen from the many eager to join the expedition, Cortés once more set out on his march to the capital city of the Aztecs. The Spaniards were in fine fettle, for the nearer they reached their goal the more luring became the tales of the fabulous wealth of Montezuma and the beauty and magnificence of his capital

Their way led past Cholula, the Sacred City of the Aztecs. With its great pyramid and its many temples, its broad streets and well-built adobe houses, Cholula was one of the important cities of the Aztec Empire; and as such, its inhabitants were the bitter enemies of the Tlascalans. Cortés had been warned not to enter Cholula; but feeling that here indeed was an opportunity to plant the Cross in a truly heathen city, the dauntless Spaniard marched his army boldly in, leaving only the Tlascalans to camp outside the city walls. The Cholulans escorted the white men to their quarters, with a great show of cordiality; but secretly, and acting upon instructions from Montezuma, they were waiting only till the Spaniards should be well cornered in the adobe courts before they should fall on them and completely annihilate them, for there could be no escape. Thus, trapped like rats, nothing could have saved them, had not Marina, Cortés' faithful friend and interpreter, learned the plot from a gossiping Indian woman and quickly informed her master.

What followed is called the Cholula Massacre,

and is considered one of the great blots on the career of this Spanish conqueror. But he merely met treachery with treachery; and he sincerely believed it to be the only way to save his army. Politely requesting all the Cholulan nobles and chiefs to come together in the plaza, so that he might address them, Cortés waited till the place was close-packed with Indians; then suddenly his cannons spoke, spreading rapid destruction, his muskets barked fire, and the dreaded horses charged in and trampled under foot the stampeding and unarmed natives, who were taken wholly by surprise. Over the bodies of the dead and dying, the Spaniards fought their way out of the city, leaving thousands of slain in their wake; while from outside the walls the Tlascalans, hearing the cannons, rushed in upon their enemies, the Cholulans, and massacred and pillaged right and left, regardless of age or sex. For two days the terrible carnage lasted; only those Cholulans who sought refuge in the hills escaped.

Leaving Cholula in charred ruins, Cortés once more set out for the golden city of Tenochtitlán, about thirty miles away. Ahead of him rose in all their majesty the two snowclad peaks, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, forming between them a beautiful gateway into the Valley of Mexico. This road Cortés chose, climbing ever upward until he came out on a great plateau from which his entire army could look down upon the



marvelous panorama of the Aztec capital. With its palaces and temples, its causeways and dykes, its street-canal and great lakes, the city was far more imposing and more beautiful than even they had dreamed.

Another ambassador now arrived from Montezuma. Again the superstitious Emperor had changed his mind, for an aged Indian woman had read in "the blood of the hibiscus blossom" dire things if the Spaniards should enter Tenochtitlán. Cortés was promised anything he should ask if only he would turn his army and march back to the coast; and in addition the Aztecs would pay a yearly tribute of as much gold as the Children of the Sun should demand. The Spaniard's reply was that, having now come so far, his own king would be greatly displeased did he return without first seeking an audience with the Mexican Emperor.

Slowly the Spanish army wound its way down into the valley; and on November 7, 1519, the entire army, consisting of about four hundred Spaniards and seven thousand Indian allies, marched over the Ixtapalapa causeway and were at last in the city of Tenochtitlán.

Montezuma, still fearing they might be gods, himself came to meet them, dressed in all the gorgeous splendor that befitted an Aztec emperor, and seated in a palanquin of gold carried on the shoulders of four richly-clad nobles. Cortés and his Spanish followers were escorted to the huge palace of Axayacatl, which

was to be their quarters; and Montezuma, at the demand of Cortés, unhesitatingly swore allegiance to the King of Spain.

It seems incredible that the great Montezuma, descended from a long line of warriors, himself the most powerful ruler on the American continent, whose mere gesture was law with millions of subjects, his very name synonymous with wealth and power and might, could so have renounced all his Aztec pride and humbled himself before this mere handful of men. Only his superstition, his belief that either these men were themselves gods or had been sent by Quetzalcoatl, so completely could have changed a mighty ruler into a weakling ready to bow to the will of Cortés.

On the day following their arrival, Montezuma himself escorted the Spaniards on a tour of the city, taking them to the great market-place and eventually to the pyramidal *teocalli*, or temple, upon the flat top of which was the famous sacrificial stone where thousands of human beings were slaughtered annually as offerings to the Aztec gods. Cortés seized the opportunity to denounce the bloody religion of the Mexicans; but Montezuma was unimpressed; he merely hurried his Spanish guests back to their own quarters, where Cortés at once ordered that a chapel be built and an image of the Virgin erected. While the workmen were carrying out these orders they came upon a door that had been newly plastered over. Cortés

suspected a trap. But when the plaster was torn down, there appeared before the astonished eyes of the Spaniards such vast treasure that they were fairly dazed at the quantities of gold and silver, emeralds, opals, turquoise—all of the treasure of Axayacatl, hidden away in this secret room.

In the days that followed, the Spaniards wandered unhindered about the city of Tenochtitlán; but Cortés was fully aware of their dangerous position should Montezuma's attitude suddenly change from that of friendship; for, shut in as they were, they would be completely at the mercy of the Aztecs. Tenochtitlán at this time contained nearly a half-million inhabitants. The main part of the city was built upon an island entirely surrounded by the lake, the only connection with the mainland being broad causeways of solid masonry, which were broken at intervals to permit the free passage of boats. Over these breaches, six or more feet wide, were wooden bridges which easily could be removed or destroyed.

The Tlascalans, eager for a repetition of the Cholula massacre, constantly brought tales of treachery and plottings among the seemingly-friendly Aztecs, and when Juan de Escalante lost his life in the rebellion of one of the neighboring tribes, Cortés and his leaders decided upon a bold stroke. It was none other than to seize Montezuma himself and to hold him as hostage to insure the good behavior of his subjects. This was

done with the utmost diplomacy; and in his new quarters in the palace of Axayacatl Montezuma was shown every consideration and surrounded by his own relatives and his accustomed luxury. He continued to rule the Aztecs as their Emperor. But he was a prisoner. There was no disguising that fact, and his once-haughty soul soon became embittered. His cup of humiliation, however, was not yet filled to the brim. For when an Aztec chieftain, under torture, confessed that he had killed Juan de Escalante at the instigation of Montezuma, Cortés ordered chains put upon the royal wrists and ankles, and then had the Emperor set, under guard, outside the palace where all who passed might see him in his degradation. As to the chieftain who confessed to the killing, he and his son and their retinue of fifteen warriors were taken to the plaza in front of the *teocalli*, and before a crowd of horror-stricken Mexicans, were first crucified and then, while they writhed in agony, burned alive upon their crosses.

These and similar acts of barbarous cruelty on the part of the Spaniards were adding fuel upon the fire of Aztec hatred. The flame leaped dangerously high when Cortés and his captains marched upon the sacred *teocalli* and began to destroy the many idols they found there, substituting for them their own images of the Virgin and of St. Christopher.

Montezuma, keeping in touch with the situation

through his courtiers, now was thoroughly alarmed. He promised, for himself and all his allies, allegiance to the King of Spain, and advised Cortés to withdraw his men quickly from Mexico. But Cortés had accomplished only half of his mission. He had conquered the land for his King; and gold and wealth there seemed to be aplenty, to reward his followers; but not yet had these pagans become good Catholics. So not yet could the Crusader leave, despite the dangers that every day grew more alarming.

And then came disturbing news from the coast.

Velázquez had sent from Cuba a large expedition under Pánfilo de Narváez, with instructions to seize Cortés for insubordination and take possession of the land and wealth of New Spain, that Velázquez himself might have the glory of its conquest. When news of this reached Cortés, he acted promptly. Leaving half of his forces in Mexico, under the command of Pedro de Alvarado, he immediately set out with the remainder of his small army, gathering a few reinforcements en route. In the early hours of May 29, 1520, under cover of a furious storm, he surprised Narváez' camp at Cempoalla and with but a brief fight captured him and all his troops. With farseeing sagacity, Cortés had brought for each of Narváez' soldiers a quantity of gold, and this glittering evidence of wealth was all that was needed to enlist the entire army under the Cortés flag. With them came a needed

addition of eighty horses and twenty pieces of artillery.

Scarcely had Cortés and his weary men begun to rest when there came an urgent message from Alvarado, left back in Mexico. It was a call for help—quick help.

At once Cortés gathered his troops together and set out on forced marches to the Aztec capital; but his second entrance into the great city was vastly different from the pomp and show that greeted his first arrival. This time he found the streets deserted; sullen faces peered at him and his men from behind adobe walls, but there was an ominous quiet everywhere. He hastened to the Spanish quarters, fearing that his arrival might be too late. Alvarado and his men were there, but it was a shameful tale they had to tell. For it was the Spaniards and not the Mexicans who had precipitated the trouble which now was more than brewing. At the festival of Tóxcatl, which fell on May 20, while the Aztec nobles and their families were gathered in the courtyard of the *teocalli* for their religious celebration, the Spaniards, arriving in small groups, fully armed, had suddenly fallen upon the surprised Mexicans and massacred nearly six hundred—men, women and children—robbing them of their gala jewels which they were wearing for the *fiesta*.

This atrocious act, wholly inexcusable, was to prove the last straw. The Mexicans had waited only one



day, to bury their dead. Then their war-drums had begun to beat, their javelins had been sharpened, their shields made in readiness, and prayers and sacrifices offered to Huitzilopochtli. All food supply had been cut off from the Spaniards; and, while the palace of Axayacatl was protected by stout adobe walls and stone buildings, and while the Spanish horses and cannons partly made up for the small number of troops, it was only a question of days till Alvarado and his men would die of starvation.

The day following the arrival of Cortés and his new army, the bridges in the causeways were destroyed by the Mexicans, cutting off communication with the mainland and leaving no avenue of escape for the Spaniards. Now, indeed, they were trapped.

Cortés sent five hundred picked men into the streets to reconnoiter and do any foraging they could; but they were immediately set upon by the Mexicans and under the hail of arrows and javelins were completely routed. For days, then, the fighting went on intermittently. The Aztecs would assault the wall, making great gaps through which they would pour, only to be mowed down and driven back by the cannons. The Spaniards would retaliate by a quick cavalry charge into the close-packed streets, killing and terrifying hundreds of the natives; but, even well-armored, they could not withstand the deluge of arrows and javelins

and stones, and would have to retire as quickly as they had charged.

And each day starvation came nearer to the besieged camp. Already the Spaniards were eating their wounded horses and stray Mexican dogs; while their Indian allies, long-accustomed to eating human flesh at their religious rites, were now feeding on fallen Aztecs.

The abject Montezuma, his soul quite withered with humiliation, bore little resemblance to the haughty Aztec Emperor of pre-Cortés days. He was easily prevailed upon, now, to mount the high wall and talk to the thousands of Mexican warriors gathered below, asking them to go quietly to their homes and promising that the Spaniards would withdraw from the city and all would be as before.

At the sight of their Emperor a great hush fell upon the crowd and they listened with respectful homage. But the young Cuauhtémoc, in command of the Mexican army, derided this weakling who once had been the greatest man in the Aztec Empire but now was but a slave to the Spaniards. The fiery spirit of this young leader so inflamed the Mexicans that they rushed furiously upon the attack; and in the assault Montezuma himself was wounded. Broken now in both spirit and body, the once-proud Emperor wanted only to die. Desertion by his own men was too great a blow. He refused all nourishment, and

three days after he had stood on the wall and spoken in vain to his army, his prayers to his pagan gods were answered: Montezuma, Emperor of the Aztecs, was dead.

Even in death he was deserted. Cortés, knowing it was the Mexican custom to suspend fighting long enough for elaborate funeral ceremonies when any great man died, had Montezuma's body dropped over the wall into the Aztec camp, hoping the Spaniards might be able to steal out of the city during the ensuing lull. But the Mexicans scorned the body of the fallen Emperor; and it was quietly carried off and cremated by a servant of the royal household.

The Mexican assault upon the Spanish camp now became more furious and determined; and Cortés knew that if there were any hope at all it lay in escape. Nothing could save them where they were. Accordingly plans were carefully laid, and at midnight of June 30, 1520—known ever afterward as *La Noche Triste*, the Sad Night—while the city of Mexico lay sleeping, the Spanish army crept out, foolishly taking with them all the gold they could carry. Three armored and movable towers had been constructed for their protection much as armored cars are used now, and a movable bridge to throw across the breaches in the causeway. So minutely had the retreat been planned, and so quietly did they creep out, that the entire army, with all its impedimenta, would doubtless

have escaped, had not an old woman seen them and given the alarm. Immediately the dreaded war-gongs sounded, the Mexicans sprang to their weapons, and the waters of the lake teemed with canoes swarming to grab the prey as it reached the breaches in the causeway.

The night was pitch-dark. At the sound of the war-gongs, the Spaniards rushed forward and threw their movable bridge over the first of the breaches. Across this the advance guard hastened; and then came the first of the armored towers. The Spaniards had not reckoned on its weight. It completely shattered the fragile bridge and sank to the lake below. Wild confusion followed. The army now was cut apart, some on the second section of the causeway, some on the first; their retreat to the mainland was checked with the loss of their bridge; Mexicans were pouring around them by the thousands, cutting into their ranks with arrows, javelins and stones; in the congested causeway it was almost impossible to bring the cannons into play; and, worst of all, in the darkness and confusion, there was no way of telling friend from foe. Hundreds of the Spaniards and their allies fell at that first breach. Back and forward they fought, Indians from the canoes reaching up to grab their feet and pull them over into the water. The second breach was so filled with bodies of the dead, with can-

nons, with gold and other impedimenta of the soldiers, that there was little need for a bridge.

In a frenzy of blood and a pandemonium of shrieks and groans, the fighting went on. The causeway was two miles long. Every inch of it was contested in a hand-to-hand combat that, for its horrors and its carnage, has no parallel in history. At the third channel many Spaniards threw themselves into the water, to swim across or mercifully drown; but they were grabbed by vulture hands and dragged into canoes to be saved for living sacrifice on the dreadful altars of the Mexican gods.

At this third channel, it is claimed, Alvarado, his horse having been killed under him, vaulted the six feet of seething chasm below. The spot—now in the heart of Mexico City—is still called *El Salto de Alvarado*.

During all the terrible hours of that dreadful *Noche Triste*, Cortés was fearless and untiring in his efforts to save his troops and keep up their morale. Oblivious to personal danger he rode back and forth, encouraging where courage seemed most sorely needed; and when dawn came and the pitifully few survivors found themselves at last upon the mainland, they at once took up the march, exhausted as they were. They were not pursued very far, however, for the Aztecs relied upon their neighboring allies to finish what they so well had begun. When the Spaniards reached the

village of Popotla, it is related, Cortés sat down beneath a friendly tree and, saddened beyond control, wept over those he was leaving behind. More than four thousand of his Indian allies had perished and eight hundred Spaniards. The tree under which Cortés sat is somewhat timeworn now, but it still stands at Popotla and is carefully guarded from souvenir-hunters. It is known as the Tree of the Sad Night—*El Arbol de la Noche Triste*.

Cortés and his straggling followers were harassed by Aztec allies at every step, but they continued steadily onward toward friendly Tlascala, hoping there to find much-needed food and rest. Suddenly, on July 7, they were completely surrounded by an enemy army. Thousands of Indians were gathered in battle array, their war-drums beating, their arrows and javelins showering death and dismay among the Spaniards. Only Cortés' presence of mind and his unflinching courage saved his exhausted army from utter destruction. Knowing the great veneration with which the Indians regarded their war banner, he gave his heartening cry, "Santiago and at them!" and himself charged straight for the enemy chief, killing him with his broadsword and snatching the standard from its bearer. This fearlessness, together with the charging horses, so terrified the Indians that, with their chief killed and their banner lost, they turned and fled. The combat



lasted for about four hours, and is known as the Battle of Otumba.

Without further molestation, the Spaniards at last reached Tlascala, and found themselves among staunch friends. Now for the first time, after all the weary days, the men could really rest and have their wounds attended to. Cortés himself had a serious scalp wound, and two fingers had to be amputated.

In all his extraordinary career, at no time did Cortés show that uncrushable spirit more strongly than after this disastrous retreat from the Aztec capital. Even before he had begun to recover from his wounds he was planning a renewed attack upon Mexico. The Tlascalan warriors were eager to join him, in spite of their numbers that had been lost. Cortés enlisted several thousand of them, and then, when he and his men had sufficiently recovered, he returned to the coast and added as many thousand Totonacs to his forces.

While he was at Vera Cruz there came unexpected aid. Two ships laden with horses and munitions arrived from Cuba—sent by Velázquez to further the expedition of Narváez. Cortés, with his ready tongue and his eloquent pleas for the salvation of pagan souls, had no difficulty in adding the new supplies and the men to his own forces. Three ships then came in from Jamaica and their crews, too, threw in their lot with him; and a boat from Hispaniola, with

a cargo of military stores and soldier-adventurers, now made a most timely arrival at Vera Cruz.

Remembering the disastrous effect of the Aztec canoes on *La Noche Triste*, Cortés had material provided for the construction of thirteen brigantines to be used upon the lake surrounding Tenochtitlán.

When all was in readiness, the march again was taken up; and so once more Cortés arrived on the outskirts of the formidable city. He had now nearly a thousand Spanish soldiers and more than two hundred thousand Tlascalan and Totonac allies, besides valuable field-pieces and great stores of ammunition. The brigantines were constructed and, to the amazement of the inland natives, were launched upon the lake. They were manned with crossbowmen and musketeers, and a cannon was placed on the prow of each vessel to do effective work in sweeping the lake of enemy canoes or in bombarding the city.

But during all the months that these Spanish preparations had been in progress in Tlascala and Vera Cruz, the Mexicans had by no means been idle. On the death of Montezuma II, his brother Cuitláhuac had succeeded to the throne, and he had begun immediately the fortification of the city and the reorganization of the Aztec army. And then a terrible plague had fallen upon Tenochtitlán. One of the soldiers of Narváez had brought with him into the city a disease wholly unknown to the Mexicans—the

dreaded smallpox. Once it had gained headway among the Indians it had swept unchecked through the close-packed city, claiming at least fifty thousand victims and among them the Emperor Cuitláhuac.

The superstitious natives looked upon this unknown pestilence as but another supernatural evidence that their gods had deserted them and were with the white men; and it is believed that those who now remained alive would in all humbleness have submitted to Cortés, believing it to be the will of their gods, had there not arisen among them one of the greatest heroes of all history—Cauhtémoc, or, as he is often known, Guatemozin.

Cauhtémoc was the son-in-law of Montezuma, and had been at the head of the Aztec army when it drove the Spaniards from the city on *La Noche Triste*. On the death of Cuitláhuac, he succeeded to the throne of the Aztecs and became their eleventh and last emperor. Although now only twenty-five he already had proved himself a brave warrior and a great leader. As a ruler his outstanding characteristic was his unswerving loyalty to his race. During his reign the Aztec Empire came to an end; but it was a glorious end, the heroic tenacity of the Mexicans who fought for their homes and their gods finding parallel in the courage of this man, their leader, whose indomitable spirit would not accept defeat.

Immediately upon the coronation of Cauhtémoc

he began to clean the city of the last vestiges of the scourge, which fortunately had gone as quickly as it had come. Then he saw to the strengthening of the fortifications; he had the causeways leading across the lake barricaded, provisions stored up against a possible siege, and the army, now numbering about two hundred thousand, well drilled; while on the lake the war-canoes were organized into efficient and ably-handled fleets.

Spies brought almost hourly reports from the Spanish camp; and when the thirteen brigantines appeared upon the lake, Cuauhtémoc had a fleet of three hundred war-canoes already lying in wait for them. The canoes, fully confident, dashed out: three hundred against thirteen seemed absurd odds. But they had not reckoned on the might of the cannons. When the brigantines spoke it was with voices of thunder and fire. To the surprise and consternation of Cuauhtémoc, his fleet was completely destroyed, while the new giants of the lake lay wholly unharmed.

With the destruction of the enemy canoes, Cortés felt that the siege of Tenochtitlán was well begun. He organized his army in three divisions, commanded respectively by Pedro de Alvarado, Cristóbal de Olid, and Gonzalo de Sandoval. These divisions were to enter the city simultaneously by three different causeways, while Cortés commanded the brigantines and gave assistance to the land troops wherever most

needed. Terrible days of slaughter followed, as inch by inch the Spaniards fought their way into the valiantly defended city.

One night, to their horror, they saw a great light upon the flat top of the Aztec temple and there, while they watched, four of their own comrades were stretched upon the sacrificial stone and their hearts torn out and offered, dripping warm blood, to Huitzilopochtli, the hideous War-god. Their bodies were cut into small pieces and eaten, as part of the religious rites, but the heads of the slaughtered men were sent to neighboring tribes with word that Huitzilopochtli at last had spoken and had told the priests that in eight days the Aztecs would have a glorious victory and every Spaniard remaining alive would be sacrificed, even as these had been, upon the altars of the gods. This report not only encouraged Mexican allies to give their fullest support, to this cause of Huitzilopochtli, and brought in neutral tribes, but it so terrified the superstitious Indians with Cortés that they were eager to desert him while there was yet time. In order to pacify them he had to cease all fighting and remain inactive till the dreaded eighth day had passed. Then, nothing untoward having occurred, the Indian allies were convinced that the white man's god was more powerful even than Huitzilopochtli, and with this assurance the fighting was resumed with greater vigor than ever.





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### A RIVER ROAD IN OAXACA

The road follows the river-bed, for the land on both  
sides is deep sand.





### THE PYRAMID OF CHOLULA

This artificial pyramid, built thousands of years ago, was a base for a temple to the Sun-god. Indian worshipers ascend the steps on their knees.

The Mexicans suffered frightful losses. The canons were mowing them down by the hundreds. Time and again during the dreadful days of carnage, Cortés endeavored to end the slaughter by sending messages to Cuauhtémoc begging him to cease fighting and acknowledge his allegiance to the King of Spain. But the Aztec Emperor was fighting for his race, for his country, for his gods, for freedom and absolute independence. Invariably his reply would be that rather than see the Mexicans slaves to the Spaniards he would lead the last one to a glorious death under the Aztec banner. And so the fight, and the appalling misery of famine and pestilence that stalked in its wake, went on.

After nearly two months the Spaniards were in the heart of the city; but the stone and adobe houses were veritable fortresses, their flat tops piled high with stones which were hurled down upon the white men with deadly results, while from the windows arrows and javelins found their sure mark. This new peril could be averted only with fire-brands; and soon half the city was in flames.

As the Spaniards closed in—gaining inch by inch but nevertheless gaining—Cuauhtémoc planned to retreat to the mainland where he could reorganize the remnants of his army and rally his dispirited allies. But while his royal canoe, filled with his bodyguard of nobles, was slipping noiselessly across the lake, an

eagle eye on one of the brigantines discovered it and quickly turned the cannon upon it. Before the cannon could be fired, however, Cuauhtémoc himself stood up, straight and tall in his canoe, and announced that he was the Emperor of the Aztecs, he did not want these nobles who were his friends killed, rather would he be taken prisoner than to sacrifice them. Accordingly he was permitted to board the brigantine with his party, and they were taken to Cortés.

The Spanish conqueror, himself the acmé of courage, could recognize this quality in a foe. He received Cuauhtémoc, therefore, not only as befit a royal prisoner but as a valiant warrior besides. This unexpected courtesy so touched Cuauhtémoc, and the anguish of defeat so wrung his brave heart, that tears came to his eyes. "I have done all that I could for my country and my people," he said. "I can do no more. Take your dagger and run it through my heart. Rather would I die."

Cortés praised the courage and the loyalty of the young Emperor, and assured him that he would remain upon the throne which he so valiantly had defended, only he would rule under a greater king, Charles V. But the proud Aztec was asking no favors for himself; he begged only that clemency be shown his suffering people.

When the Mexicans learned that their beloved Emperor had been captured they laid down their arms

and made no further resistance, after seventy-five days of almost constant fighting to maintain their independence. Thus on August 13, 1521, the city surrendered and the great Aztec Empire came to an end, being thenceforth a Spanish colony.

Three days and nights were spent in clearing the streets of the thousands of dead bodies and in checking fast-spreading disease by purifying the city with bonfires.

Then the conquistadores began a feverish search for treasure. At last, after all the exciting months, with their hardships, with their discouragements and their rosy hopes, the great Aztec capital was theirs. And now for the golden reward!



## V. DARKNESS AND DAWN

THE SEARCH FOR GOLD  
THE MARCH TO HONDURAS  
DARK DAYS IN MEXICO  
THE FIRST AUDIENCIA  
GUZMÁN'S ATROCITIES  
THE SECOND AUDIENCIA  
THE FIST-FIGHT AT QUERÉTARO  
THE MIRACLE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE  
PUEBLO DE LOS ANGELES  
THE FIRST VICEROY  
THE SIEGE OF GUADALAJARA  
THE CONQUEST OF YUCATAN  
THE FABULOUS SEVEN CITIES  
THE DOWNFALL OF CORTÉS  
THE NEW LAWS OF LAS CASAS  
THE DAWN OF PROGRESS





## V

### DARKNESS AND DAWN

THE city of Tenochtitlán, the once-proud capital of the Aztecs, already more than half in ruins from the fire-brands of the conquerors, was now destroyed completely by the Spaniards in their mad greed for gold. Houses were torn down, courtyards were dug up, temples were laid low, Aztec nobles were tortured, and further tortured; but comparatively little treasure was found. The more feverish became the search, the more furious were the Spaniards—and the more cruel, until finally these Christians, so zealous in their religion, resorted to the most atrocious acts of barbarity. But the gold and jewels for which they were seeking were not to be found. At last they were convinced that all the royal treasure had been buried and Cuauhtémoc would know its hiding-place. Most of his nobles had been tortured—they had had their hands cut off, or their feet, or their ears—but they had revealed nothing. Now it was the Emperor's turn.

Cortés at first demurred, for he had treated his royal prisoner with the utmost courtesy; but when the demands of his men became insistent, and his own greed

for gold was fanned into a fanatic flame, he resorted to one of those acts of incredible cruelty which nothing can excuse, and which again and again darkened the glory of his career. He had Cuauhtémoc, the proud Emperor of the Aztecs, and another king, the ruler of Tlacopán, brought to the public plaza in Coyoacán, their feet soaked in oil, to prolong the torture, then held over a slow fire and roasted until their feet fell off. The Emperor suffered the terrible agony so stoically, making no outcry, begging no quarter, that even the cruel Cortés was compelled to admire him and order that the torture cease.

Tenochtitlán—the name of which was permanently changed to Mexico—had now to be rebuilt. Cortés lived in the nearby village of Coyoacán, but it was under his supervision that the reconstruction of the city went forward. Splendid buildings replaced those that had been destroyed; new causeways led to the mainland; fortifications and arsenals were built; two large palaces were erected for Cortés himself. The new city of Mexico grew rapidly, and excelled in magnificence even the former Tenochtitlán of Montezuma.

So popular was Cortés in Spain that he was named Governor-General of Mexico for life. He was now intoxicated with power. Expeditions were sent out in all directions for further conquest and colonization, and to seek for gold mines, for the Aztecs would not

reveal the source of the gold found in the capital. One expedition, under Cristóbal de Olid, went by water to Honduras to found there a colony and so get new lands for Spain, and thus add to the glory of Cortés the Conqueror. But Olid, adopting the tactics of Cortés himself at Vera Cruz, having founded his colony in Honduras, promptly disclaimed all connection with his former commander, declaring himself responsible to the King of Spain only. News of this insubordination infuriated Cortés. He hastily dispatched a fleet, under Las Casas, to arrest Olid and bring him back in chains. Not satisfied, however, Cortés himself set out on a march overland to Honduras, leaving Mexico on October 12, 1524. His large army included many Nahuá warriors, and with them were Cuauhtémoc and the Tlacopán cacique who had been so horribly tortured in the plaza at Coyoacán. These two rulers, both greatly loved by their men, were carried on the expedition as hostages to prevent a rebellion of the natives.

This famous march of Cortés—of more than fifteen hundred miles over cactus-covered mountains and arid deserts—was one of continuous and terrible hardships. Starvation threatened the army at every step, sickness and disease spread through the camp, the natives along the route constantly harassed them. The Spaniards, suffering from scarcity of food and water, gave vent to their emotions by resorting to

acts of cruelty unbelievable in a race supposedly civilized and Christian. Each day as the march was taken up the unfit among the natives—the sick or the utterly exhausted—were soundly lashed for their weakness, the leather whips cutting into their naked flesh, and then left in a pool of blood to die by the roadside attended only by the vultures that circled all too eagerly over them and not always waited for the end.

So many of the Indians had died, and the remainder were so weakened by famine and the hardships of the march, that Cortés found he no longer needed Cuauhtémoc and the Tlacopán cacique. Their feet having been burned off during the torture, both had to be carried on the march; and now Cortés wished to be rid of them. Under the flimsiest of pretexts—one wonders why he even attempted to excuse his atrocious act—he had the two royal prisoners hanged to a ceiba-tree by the roadside and there he left them, swinging from a limb, waiting for the hovering vultures. Thus the last and greatest of the Aztec Emperors met his death; and the darkest of all blots went upon the name of Cortés, and was to have far-reaching results upon his subsequent downfall. All the brilliant achievements of his career were dimmed by the horror of this one outrage.

During the two years that Cortés was absent from Mexico, affairs in the capital were in utter disorder. Quarrels arose among those left in charge; treachery

and torture were rampant; the natives rose in revolt and innumerable massacres followed; and the progress of the colony was sadly retarded. Conditions were becoming so terrible that natives as well as Spaniards wished that Cortés with his iron hand were again in control. When, therefore, he returned unexpectedly in 1526, he received a royal welcome and was escorted into the city with all the pomp and honors due a hero and a great leader.

But his glory was short-lived. For jealousy had been at work at the Court of Spain, tales of atrocity in Mexico and abuse of power had been magnified, and no sooner was Cortés back in the capital than Luis Ponce de León arrived with a commission from Charles V to supersede him as Governor of New Spain. Naturally the hero of the hour was astounded. Far from showing any ill feeling, however, he greeted the ambassador cordially and gave a great banquet in his honor; he even drank to the health of the new governor, and Ponce de León returned the compliment, not knowing that his wine had been poisoned. He lived just long enough to name as his successor Marcos de Aguilar, who had accompanied him from Spain. Aguilar, an old and feeble man, weak both in body and in will, was an easy tool in Cortés' hand; but when, after seven months in office, Aguilar died, in 1527, the government went by common consent to Alonzo de Estrada and Gonzalo de Sandoval.



Once in office, Estrada began a relentless persecution of Cortés. The conqueror withdrew to his palace in Cuernavaca; but so bitter were his enemies, so exaggerated the ill tales they told, that at last he was compelled to embark for Spain, to plead his own cause before the King. And his fluent tongue once more proved his salvation; for the King shed even further glory upon him by knighting him and creating him Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca. True, the civil affairs in New Spain had been taken out of his hands, but he retained the military control, and had permission to make further explorations and conquests.

The King, secretly fearing the overwhelming ambition and the growing popularity of the conqueror, was unwilling to give him supreme control; and yet it was apparent that matters were not going as they should in the new colony. Accordingly the civil affairs were placed in the hands of an *audiencia* consisting of four oidores and a president, Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán. When these men arrived in New Spain in 1528, accompanying them was the illustrious Fray Juan de Zumárraga, first Bishop of Mexico, and known, because of his just and humane treatment of the natives, as the Protector of the Indians.

This First Audiencia has one continuous record of atrocities. Two of the oidores having died, the other two joined with Guzmán in a series of such unparalleled cruelties and abuses that Zumárraga, after vain efforts

to protect the natives, at last succeeded in smuggling a letter through to the King; but Charles had now the matter of Germany on his hands, and so he turned the affairs of this troublesome colony over to his Queen. That capable lady at once appointed a new audiencia of carefully chosen men, while at the same time deciding to place the affairs of New Spain in the hands of a viceroy who should be in absolute control, answerable only to the King. The man selected for this office must be one of strong will, of great diplomacy, of a deep sense of justice, and above all of unwavering loyalty to the Spanish Crown. This excellent combination was found in Antonio de Mendoza, and he was at once appointed the first viceroy. His appointment, however, was not actually confirmed until a few years later, the affairs in New Spain being in the meantime in the hands of the Second Audiencia.

News of the appointment of a new audiencia and of the triumphal return of Cortés reached Guzmán, the president of the First Audiencia, at about the same time, and, reviewing his long record of crimes, he considered it as well to be absent when they arrived. Accordingly he set out on a conquest of his own, marching, with all the troops he could muster, through Michoacan and Jalisco. So frightful were his atrocities on this expedition that even his own Indian warriors, unable to desert, committed suicide by the dozens, hanging themselves from the trees and killing one

another in death-pacts. The fanatic Guzmán and his cut-throat followers were mad with the lust for gold. Where a little treasure was forthcoming, torture was inflicted in the hope that it would produce more; where none was to be had, the infuriated Guzmán devised the most barbarous methods of torture, that word of it might precede him and gold aplenty be waiting in the next village.

While Guzmán continued northward into Sinaloa, one of his captains, Juan de Oñate, remained in Jalisco and founded, on September 3, 1530, a city which he called Guadalajara in honor of Guzmán, who was born in the Spanish city of that name. A few years later the location of the new city was changed to its present site. Today it is the second city in size and importance in the republic.

During the time that Guzmán was writing his name in blood upon the land of Nueva Galicia—as all the country he had conquered became known—and Cortés, having returned intoxicated with his success in Spain, was off on further explorations and conquests, the new audiencia was conscientiously at work in straightening out the chaos of affairs in Mexico. It had arrived in 1531 and established itself in one of the palaces of Cortés, and had set to work at once. Its president was Sebastián Ramírez de Fuenleal, Bishop of Española.

Under the very excellent rule of Fuenleal, order was

restored in the colony, and the foundations for real progress were laid. Agriculture was given especial attention, new food-plants being introduced, and horses, sheep and cattle imported. Roads and new causeways were built. The abused encomienda system was so restricted as to end the constant bickerings and tyrannies it had caused. And similar beneficent regulations added to the welfare of the colony and assured a more just treatment of the Indians.

In Michoacan the natives were in a state of revolt. Added to the tyranny of their Spanish overlords, they could not forget the atrocious acts of Guzmán, especially his brutal murder of their king, whom he had degraded and slowly tortured to death by dragging him through the streets tied to a horse's tail, hoping thus to extort secrets of hidden gold. Missionaries sent into Michoacan were compelled to return, their efforts to pacify the natives being in vain. But there was in Mexico one man who was known to exert all his efforts in behalf of the Indians and to be fearless and persistent in his demands that they receive full justice. This was Vasco de Quiroga, one of the oidores of the Second Audiencia. His reputation as the Indians' friend had preceded him, so that when he himself went to Michoacan, order was soon restored. He was later, because of this success in dealing with the natives, appointed Bishop of Michoacan, and his name is revered there even today.

After many attempts to subjugate the Indians of Querétaro, the Spaniards at last succeeded in a very strange way. When the Othomi chieftain saw the army marching in, he realized that the Indian bows and arrows would have little effect against those mail-clad men and against their death-spreading muskets and cannons, so he craftily suggested to the Spanish leader that the possession of the territory be settled by a fist-fight, the loser to accept his defeat without further dispute. To this extraordinary suggestion the Spaniard agreed; and there followed one of the strangest battles in history. It began at sunrise and lasted until sunset, thousands of Othomies on one side, and thousands of Spaniards and Indian allies on the other, fighting, kicking, biting, trampling—there was no rule except that all weapons were barred. At sunset the Spaniards and their allies were victorious; and the Othomies, true to their word, cheerfully accepted defeat, and spent the night in feasting and dancing in honor of their new ruler, the King of Spain. Soon after this, according to tradition, there appeared in the sky immediately above the spot where this unusual battle took place, a huge cross of flame and blazing gold, with the apostle St. James beside it. This was taken to mean that he would be their patron saint, and the name of the town was then changed from Taxco to Santiago de Querétaro, and a chapel and a huge stone cross were erected in honor of this saint.

Christianity was spreading with great rapidity at about this time, and the priests, playing upon the natural superstition of the natives to help in their conversion, saw to it that frequent "miracles" occurred. The most famous of these was to be so far-reaching in its effect that even today there is no Catholic church in Mexico that has not its shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The story of this extraordinary miracle is well known in Mexico. On December 9, 1531, Cuauhtlatohua, an Indian of humble birth, who had been baptized with the Christian name of Juan Diego, was on his way to attend mass in Tlaltelolco. His path led past the small hill of Tepeyocac; and there was a story current that about a hundred years previously there had appeared on top of this hill, night after night, a beautiful arc composed of myriads of colored lights which shed their rays far over the surrounding country. This marvel had never been explained; and on this day of days Juan Diego was thinking of it as he approached the hill. Suddenly there came to his ears the sweetest music, as if a multitude of little birds were singing together, and there, to his amazement, he saw a white cloud float down and rest lightly upon the hilltop, and, as he gazed, an arc of exquisite coloring appeared against the cloud, diffusing its prismatic lights until the entire hillside appeared to be covered with fragments of shining gold and precious



stones, translucent and many-hued. In the midst of this resplendence, and framed in the prismatic glory of the arc, there now appeared a beautiful Indian woman. It was the Virgin Mary.

"My son," she said to Juan Diego, speaking in Mexican, not Spanish, "whither goest thou?"

The trembling Indian prostrated himself; but the Virgin bade him arise and go at once into Mexico and tell the Bishop that she wished a church built upon that spot. When Juan Diego raised his head from the ground, the apparition had vanished. He ran with all his speed into the city, and with difficulty gained an audience with the Bishop, Juan de Zumárraga. But the Bishop paid no heed to the story. He believed that the Indian, now nearly sixty years old, had become a religious fanatic and let his imagination run wild.

Juan Diego, haunted by the apparition, returned to the spot; and there again the Virgin appeared and bade him go once more to the Bishop. Zumárraga, while slightly impressed this time, still did not believe.

"Tell the lady to send me some evidence that will show me her commands are divine," he said.

When Juan Diego set out, Zumárraga, wondering what the crazy fellow would do, had two men follow him closely and watch him. But when he came to a small bridge across a stream he disappeared completely from their sight, and they hastened to the Bishop with the report that he was surely a witch. They could

not know, of course, that the Virgin had miraculously made him invisible.

Juan Diego, proceeding on to the hill, gave the Bishop's message to the Virgin, and she bade him come again on the morrow, when she would have divine evidence for the doubting Zumárraga.

On the morrow, however, Juan Diego completely forgot her, for he was suddenly called to the bedside of a fever-stricken and much-loved uncle, Juan Bernardino. On the next day, December 12, his uncle being worse, he was hurrying across the hills to get a priest for him, when suddenly he remembered his neglect of the Virgin. Thoroughly frightened, he changed his path, circling around the hill so that he might avoid her; but as he came to the foot of the hill he was dazzled by the same resplendence of color and light and beauty that had so stricken him with awe the first day, and in the midst of this prismatic glory, resting against a white cloud, was the Virgin, slowly descending the slope.

Before this vision Juan Diego prostrated himself; but again the gentle Virgin bade him arise.

"Be not anxious about thine uncle," she said, "for even now he is completely well. Go no farther upon thy way. Instead, go and gather for me the roses growing on top of this hill."

Astonished—for the hill was known to be barren, except for a few stunted cacti—Juan Diego neverthe-

less obeyed. He found the most exquisite roses, with a heavenly perfume, and gathering them he carried them to her held securely in the skirt of his long robe. The Virgin took the roses in her hands for an instant; and as she did so there gushed up out of the arid soil at her feet a spring of bubbling, sparkling water—today revered as *El Pocito de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. Replacing the roses, then, in the fold of Juan Diego's robe, the Virgin told him to hasten with them to the Bishop without once looking at them or showing them on the way.

Arrived in the presence of Zumárraga, Juan Diego told him all that had happened, and then opened his robe to give him the flowers. But, O miracle, the roses had disappeared, and in their stead, painted on his mantle, was a full-length picture of the Virgin herself! All who saw it dropped on their knees in awe and reverence. No longer could there be doubt! Zumárraga took the sacred robe, made of coarse cotton cloth, off the shoulders of the wondering Indian and placed it in his oratory. But news of the miracle spread like wildfire, and such crowds came from far and wide to see the marvelous painting, that Zumárraga had it framed and placed upon the altar of the Cathedral of Mexico, where all might see and worship. There it remained until in 1532 it was transferred, with the most impressive religious ceremony ever known in Christian Mexico, to the shrine which had



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### THE ROCKY COAST OF COLIMA

The surge of the Pacific is quieted in the land-locked harbor  
at Manzanillo.



#### OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Mexicans believe the original of this was miraculously painted by the Virgin Mary herself. It hangs, closely guarded, in the church at Guadalupe.



duly been built for it at the site indicated by the Virgin. It hangs now, closely guarded, in the church at Guadalupe, and a copy of it is in every Catholic church in Mexico. There are few Mexicans, even today, who do not believe it was miraculously painted by the Virgin Mary. Artists who have examined it, as closely as one can through the heavy glass that covers it, cannot determine the medium used, as it resembles neither oil nor water-color. It may have been the remarkable vegetable dyes known to the Indians of that day, which would give it the effect it has of being stamped upon the cloth. These dyes were often thickened to the consistency of oil-paints.

It was not a miracle but a dream that determined the site of Puebla, today the third city in size in the republic. Fray Toribio de Benavente, known as Padre Motolinía, received permission from the Second Audiencia to found a city in the fertile valley of Cuitlaxtoapán. While trying to decide upon the best location, a brother friar had a remarkable dream in which he saw two angels, with measuring-rods in hand, pacing the plain and lingering at a spot upon the bank of the Atoyác. Padre Motolinía accepted this as a sign from Heaven, and there, on April 15, 1532, he founded his city and called it *Pueblo de los Angeles*, which soon became *Puebla*. But a few miles away is the Pyramid of Cholula; while a short distance across the plain the snowclad peaks of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccíhuatl



cut in beautiful silhouette against the sunrise sky, or show themselves tantalizingly through a veil of clouds which curl in their hollows and hover softly about their summits. The solitary peak of Malinche rises, too, out of the plain; and far off to the east, glorious in the very early morning, is the Pico de Orizaba, waiting for the clouds to claim it.

Another tradition that accounts for the name of *Pueblo de los Angeles* is that while the cathedral was in the process of construction, angels came every night and built its beautiful twin towers. Two workmen, surprised to see the towers growing with no human aid, lay in hiding one night and watched. To their amazement they saw the Virgin Mary descend from heaven on a cloud and rest above the cathedral while a multitude of angels flew down and worked upon the towers, passing up the bricks and tiles and mortar with such dexterity that the hidden men could not follow their movements. Terrified, they fled from their hiding-place, and spread the news abroad; and the city ever afterward was known as *El Pueblo de los Angeles*.

The cathedral at Puebla ranks next in size and importance to that in Mexico City and is one of the most beautiful Catholic churches in America. As Mexico City has been the political capital of the country, so Puebla even from its beginning has been the religious center. It is often called the City of Churches, and the Rome of Mexico.

Soon after the founding of Puebla a new era began in the colony of New Spain; for Fuenleal, weary of his arduous tasks as president of the audiencia, asked to be relieved; and Antonio de Mendoza at last received his commission as viceroy and set out for Mexico. He arrived in 1535, and undertook at once to carry forward the excellent work begun by Fuenleal. In accordance with royal orders, Mendoza strengthened the fortifications of Mexico and Vera Cruz and had forts and strongholds built in outlying towns; he curbed the abuse of the encomiendas, and vastly improved the status of the natives; he furthered the efforts of the clergy in founding hospitals for the Indians, and schools where they might be taught European trades; and he gave his full support to the Church, that it might be unhampered in its work of converting the natives. At the same time, and also acting under royal orders, Mendoza endeavored to ascertain whether the heavily taxed Indians might not be taxed yet more heavily, and whether further tribes might not be brought under Spanish domination and thus further tributes collected. Also, the search for hidden treasures was to be carried on unceasingly.

Negro slaves had been imported into New Spain; for the Indians working in gold-mines and sugar-fields under the lash of Spanish overlords were unable to survive the brutal punishment and exhaustion which was their constant lot: they died almost as fast as

they could be replaced. The negroes were more accustomed to slavery and hard labor. But they arrived in the colony in such large numbers that they soon became a menace; for they, too, felt the Spanish lash, and hatred flamed within them. Secretly, in 1537, they planned an insurrection which should mean the massacre of every white man in New Spain. Mexico might have had a wholly different history had not Mendoza learned of this plot through a negro he had befriended, and by quick action curbed the insurrection and put to death all of its leaders.

In Nueva Galicia, at this time, affairs were going none too well. Nuño de Guzmán, who in his march through Michoacan, Jalisco and Sinaloa, had left a wake of hatred and misery behind him, in his government of Nueva Galicia had been so brutal, his crimes so atrocious, that he had been replaced by Pérez de la Torre. In 1538 the natives rebelled and Torre at once marched against them and soon put them to rout, but in the skirmish he was mortally wounded.

The governorship of Nueva Galicia now went to Cristóbal de Oñate, who endeavored to pacify the Indians. For two years he seemed to be successful, and then their grievances culminated in what is called the War of Michtón—named from the rocky hills where the natives had their stronghold. From the steep cliffs and the deep ravines of Michtón they made quick raids upon the outlying haciendas, forcing the Span-

iards to flee for safety to the partly fortified city of Guadalajara. Here for weeks the Spaniards were in a state of siege. Oñate sent urgent calls for help, and every day he expected aid from Mexico; but the anxious days went by and no word from Mendoza arrived.

The Spaniards were in despair. And then, unexpectedly, there came great good news. Pedro de Alvarado, one of the original conquistadores, en route from Guatemala to the islands of the South Seas, had cast anchor at the Pacific port of Navidad. A messenger was quickly dispatched to him; and Alvarado, big-hearted and fearless adventurer that he was, promptly left his own affairs to rush with a hundred of his men by forced marches to the aid of the Spaniards in the besieged city. Once in Guadalajara and learning the situation, he boldly set out for the cliffs of Michtón to rout the Indians from their entrenchments. In this he no doubt would have succeeded had not the cowardice of one of his own men, who was suddenly terrified and turned to run, caused Alvarado and his horse to fall from the top of the cliff. Hopelessly crushed, Alvarado died a few days later, July 4, 1541, in Guadalajara. Of all the conquistadores who accompanied Cortés in his conquest of Mexico, none had so eventful a life, so heroic a career, and so futile an end as Pedro de Alvarado.

The Indians, encouraged by this mishap, swept down upon Guadalajara; but they were promptly driven back

by Oñate, and once more entrenched themselves in the cliffs to bide their time, knowing that sooner or later the white men in the besieged city must starve.

The months dragged on. There seemed to be small hope for Oñate and his despairing and starving men, as day after day and week after week went by. And then at last Mendoza bethought himself of Guadalajara and set out from Mexico at the head of a large body of troops. Passing leisurely through Michoacan, he entered Jalisco and came at last to the fortified cliffs of Michtón. Here, to the amazement of the Spaniards as well as the Indians, who waited in astonishment to see what would happen, the Viceroy camped directly in front of the stronghold and, so that he would not be taking an unfair advantage of the poor heathens and the matter would be perfectly legal, he had one of his priests shout three times to the rebellious natives, first the tenets of the Roman Catholic religion and then the fact that, by authority from the Pope, who represented Jesus Christ, all of that land belonged to the King of Spain, and the Indians would have to submit to his rule. As this harangue was entirely in Spanish, of which the natives understood not one word, and as they were not especially interested in the Pope or Jesus Christ anyway, their response was a hail of arrows and well-aimed stones.

And so the battle began. It lasted for nearly three weeks; but now it was the Indians who were besieged,

for in their cliffs they had little of either food or water. Through the efforts of two padres, the Indians at last capitulated, some returning peacefully to their former homes near Guadalajara; others being permitted to withdraw, with their chief, Tenamaxtl, to the mountains of Nayarit.

Mendoza now arranged for the removal of Guadalajara to a more strategic point and for its better fortification. Then he returned to Mexico, passing through Michoacan and stopping for a while at the pretty little village of Valladolid which had been founded by him a few months previously, in May, 1541. Today the city is called Morelia and is one of the most charming in all of Mexico. A more beautiful site could not have been chosen, for it lies in a deep horseshoe-curve of the Rio Chiquito, almost surrounded by this river and the Rio Grande. Stretching out in front of it are the broad plains of Michoacan, golden-yellow with ripening grain, green with tall maize, or starred with myriads of bright-colored flowers. In the distance the plains are edged with lavender-blue hills, some of them rising to ten thousand feet. The Morelia of today, besides its historical associations, of which there are many, is noted for three things: its quaintness, its beautiful women, and its quince wine.

Alvarado's fleet, still lying at Navidad and now under the command of Villalobos, was sent by Men-



doza on its original quest to the South Seas, and in 1542 it reached the islands which Magellan had discovered in 1521 and which Villalobos called the *Islas Filipinas*, now the Philippines.

And while all of this was happening in Mexico and Guadalajara, there was great excitement in far-off Yucatan. At first little attention had been paid to the peninsula, for when the conquistadores had cruised along its coast there had been little in the dreary-looking shores to excite interest. But Francisco de Montejo, who had visited Yucatan with Grijalva and later returned to Spain to act as Cortés' representative in that country, did not forget the land of the magnificently decorated temples and the natives whose civilization seemed to excel that in many parts of the Old World. And the more he recalled his brief experiences there, the greater seemed the possibilities of the land. At last he decided to conquer and colonize it. Securing a grant from the King, he set sail for the island of Cozumel, and arriving in 1527, proceeded across to the mainland.

The heat was intense, the mosquitoes were unbearable, and sickness and discontent quickly spread through the camp. Almost before they landed there were murmurings of mutiny and retreat among the four hundred men. Only a leader with a fearless heart and an iron will could have kept on. Ahead lay miles of sandy waste, baking under a merciless sun; or

jungles so matted with vegetation that the way must be hacked through for mile after mile, jungles alive with venomous reptiles, crawling under foot and hanging from the trees; ahead, too, were the Maya warriors, who would contest every inch of their land, and who fought with poisoned arrows. In all that waste there were no rivers, no lakes, no drinking-water except what might occasionally be found at native huts, collected during the rainy season and now swarming with fever germs. Behind them, on the other hand, lay their comfortable ships, the friendly natives on the island of Cozumel, the soft, blue water of the Caribbean—and beyond that, home.

Once ashore, the heat-crazed men wanted to leave quickly this land of many terrors. But Montejo had come to conquer. With no hesitation, he followed the example set by Cortés at Vera Cruz and destroyed every vessel; so now there was no turning back, nothing to do but to follow their fearless leader.

"What is the name of this country?" Montejo asked the natives who crowded round.

"Ouyoukatán! Ouyoukatán!" they exclaimed. This meant, "Hear them speak!" for the words of the white men were new and strange to the natives; they had not known there was any other language in the world except their own, the Maya. But the Spaniards thought they were saying, "O, Yucatán!" in answer to their question; and so the peninsula received its name.

As soon as Montejo and his followers left the coast they met with fierce resistance, for the Indians fought them at almost every step. In spite of this, however, and in spite of the intense heat which was taking its daily toll, the determined leader pushed farther and farther inland. Thus month followed exciting month, and only when more than half the Spaniards had been killed and starvation and poisoned arrows were daily threatening the remainder did Montejo give up his project and with difficulty fight his way to the coast. From there, assisted by his friend Cortés, he made his way to the city of Mexico.

But the spirit of conquest and daring adventure had now flamed high in Montejo's son, Francisco de Montejo, and this young man immediately began to organize a second expedition. Accompanied by his cousin of the same name, and a large following, he at last set out for the peninsula and entered Yucatan by way of Tabasco and Campeche. The Indians resisted this new invasion as determinedly as they had the previous one, but little by little they were compelled to give way; and eventually, in 1540, the decisive battle was won by Montejo at the ancient Maya city of T-ho. This site he selected in 1542 for his capital, changing the name of the town to Mérida because it seemed to him that this land of the Mayas excelled in magnificence even the splendor of the Old World Mérida.

Montejo at once set about the construction of a modern city to replace the ancient T-ho; and for this purpose many splendid Maya buildings were destroyed in order to get the massive stone blocks, already hewed and many of them elaborately sculptured, for use in the new houses of the Spaniards. So well was Montejo's own mansion constructed that today, after nearly four centuries, it continues to be occupied as a dwelling and is preserved in almost its original massive excellence.

Back in Mexico about this time excitement was running wild among the conquistadores. For a friar who had just returned from the mountainous region of the north had, according to his tales, discovered seven cities built of pure gold. This was Fray Marcos de Niza, who had been among the Zuñi Indians beyond the northwestern outposts of New Spain, and had returned to Mexico, in 1539, with a report of his discoveries. To Mendoza he told the exact truth; but the Viceroy was quick to see here an opportunity to awaken enthusiasm for new conquests, so he asked Fray Niza to call upon his lively imagination for a story to spread abroad. And this the good friar was nothing loth to do. It is claimed that he spent two hours alone in his cell in deep meditation and when he emerged his story had taken beautiful shape. He told it off-handedly, as if golden cities meant little to a servant of the Church whose thoughts dwelt upon more spir-

itual matters, but when pressed for details he was quite willing to give them. Yes, the houses were built entirely of gold, of ingots about the size of bricks, the furniture was of gold studded with jewels—which grew in value and beauty each time the tale was related; their very streets were paved with nuggets of gold, spread there by the cartload to cover the mud.

From these marvelous tales grew the famous legends of *The Seven Cities of Cíbola* and *The Golden Land of the Gran Quivira*. Excitement knew no bounds. Mad for gold, the conquistadores could think of nothing but this fabulous land which Niza painted ever more and more alluringly. The good friar himself had not actually seen the Seven Cities, to be sure, nor did he know precisely where they lay, but he had talked with natives who lived there. Among those who set off in feverish haste to search for the golden cities the most renowned was Francisco de Coronado, who swept across the sunbaked mesas with his picturesque army of a thousand mounted conquistadores, and, although not finding the fabulous gold, added such luster to his name that he is known today as one of the greatest explorers of the American Southwest.

Cortés at this time was away on his voyages of discovery, searching for new lands of wealth that might replace his vanishing fortune and retrieve his fast-waning prestige. But even more than for lands was he searching for a strait, then believed to exist, which

should connect the Atlantic with the Pacific and prove a shortcut to the Spice Islands of the South Seas. In 1536 he discovered the peninsula of Lower California, and explored much of the gulf that separates it from the mainland. And while he was thus engaged in his expeditions up and down the west coast there came to him the tale of the golden cities of Cíbola. Cortés had been given military command in New Spain, including the right of conquest. Mendoza, as viceroy, considered himself supreme in command. Each, therefore, claimed the right to explore and conquer this new, fabulously wealthy land. Cortés, without more ado, made preparations to set out at once for the Seven Cities; Mendoza promptly seized his ships at Tehuantepec, imprisoned his followers, and made things generally uncomfortable. To add to all this, the fickle King of Spain again had changed his mind, and had sent ambassadors to Mexico to divest the Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca of all his power and much of his glory.

Thus dishonored, and now impoverished, having spent his entire fortune in his expeditions of discovery, Cortés once again, in 1540, set out for Spain, to plead his own cause before the King. But only years of discouragement and uncertainty resulted. At last, destitute, and broken in spirit, Cortés decided to return to Mexico to spend his last days on the soil that at least was his by conquest. But suddenly he was stricken



with fever, and on December 2, 1547, he died near Seville, attended only by his son. Then, by one of those strange ironies of fate, there came, in death, all the honors that in life would have meant so much to him. For no sooner had he died than he became a great national hero, and as such he was buried at Seville with the utmost pomp and ceremony. Five years later his body was removed to Mexico City; and in 1794, after two centuries and a half, it came to its final resting-place at the hospital which Cortés himself had founded in his earliest days in the city of Tenochtitlán.

The revenue of the Church in New Spain was coming from the very Spaniards who were most brutal in their treatment of the natives; so the abuses and cruelties continued, while the priests made little interference. One notable exception to this was Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, Bishop of Chiapas, whose protests were so vehement and persistent as to cause the enactment in Spain of the so-called *New Laws*, which were sent to the colony in 1542, and which aroused the utmost indignation and alarm among the slaveholding Spaniards. Among other beneficent provisions, all slaves were to be freed except where ownership could be legally proved, these were to become free when their owners died, and no further natives were ever at any time to be enslaved. In 1544 Francisco Tello de Sandoval arrived to see that the New

Laws were properly enforced; and in spite of the utmost efforts of Las Casas, Sandoval was bribed to report to Spain that the laws were impracticable, and thus they were nullified, and the cruelties of the Spaniards continued. But Las Casas, the friend of the Indian, continued until his death in his vain efforts to secure justice for the natives.

In 1545 a terrible pestilence swept the country, taking its toll by the thousands. The Indians especially suffered, and the excellent and untiring work of the priests during this scourge did more than all else to advance their cause among the grateful Indians.

Frequent "miracles" still were happening, however, and these, too, brought in many converts. During a prolonged drought in Tlascala a friar was walking one day on a nearby hill and his keen eye discovered a tiny trickle of water. It was a small spring, all but hidden by a thick tangle of vines. Its water would be a blessing indeed during the terrible drought; but the quick-witted friar saw still another use for the spring. A "miracle" would be far more effective with the superstitious natives than all his persuasive preachings. He hurried back to the village and spread abroad the wonderful news that he had talked with the Virgin. She had appeared to him in all her shining glory and had said that she would relieve the sufferings of the natives because they had been faithful in their prayers. A pious Indian should go the following day to an

arid spot and there a spring would gush forth at his feet. The place and the Indian to be chosen would be revealed to the friar in his dream that night.

Thus there was time for the news to be spread far and wide, each good Catholic Indian wondering if he would be the one favored by the Virgin. There was time, too, for the friar to get up before the break of day and set out for the hill with his aged Indian servant, who had been hastily awakened and told that he was the chosen one. When they came to the spot, there, to be sure, was a glorious mass of morning-glory vines, and when the wondering Indian stooped and separated them there indeed was a spring of clear, cool water. The hill was named Ocotlán, "Place of the Pines"; and the *Santuario de Ocotlán* which now marks the site of the "miracle" is one of the most celebrated shrines in Mexico, the Virgin of Ocotlán ranking next in importance, perhaps, to the famous Virgin of Guadalupe and the *Virgen de los Remedios*.

Zumárraga, the first Bishop of Mexico, and later the first Archbishop, was responsible for many remarkable "miracles." He died in 1548, leaving an otherwise excellent record darkened by one terrible and inexcusable blot. In his fanatic bigotry, he had the priceless Aztec library at Tezcuco burned in its entirety, thus destroying the records of probably the earliest civilization in Mexico and perhaps on the American continent. For the destroyed volumes con-

tained, on their pictograph and hieroglyphic pages, stories of tribes long preceding the Aztecs, and of the earliest peregrinations of the Aztecs themselves, years, perhaps centuries, before they set out from the Seven Caves. The loss of this library is irreparable; its destruction by an intelligent man, bigot though he was, seems incredible. His example was followed by other Catholics in other parts of the country, the greatest loss being of the Maya records, which were burned in Yucatan, in Tabasco, in Chiapas, wherever they were discovered by the Catholic priests. Some true miracles fortunately preserved a few of the priceless records from the hands of those fanatics.

Under the wise and unwavering rule of Mendoza, the first viceroy, affairs in New Spain had begun to shape themselves toward real progress. When, therefore, serious trouble broke out in Peru, in 1550, Mendoza was asked by the King to assume the governorship of that equally important colony in the south. It was a request, not a command, but Mendoza set out at once for Lima, leaving the infant colony in New Spain to enter upon an eventful era of piracy, banditry and natural calamities scarcely paralleled in the history of any country or any period.



## VI. THE DAYS OF THE VICEROYS

WHEN PIRATES WERE KING  
UNGUARDED CAMPECHE  
THE SACK OF VERA CRUZ  
BUCCANEERS OF THE PACIFIC  
BURIED GOLD  
ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH  
THE CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO CITY  
THE AZTEC CALENDAR STONE  
THE LEGEND OF THE FIVE EPOCHS  
THE SACRIFICIAL STONE  
OPENING THE WILDERNESS  
THE "MIRACLES" OF THE PADRES  
PRESIDIOS IN TEXAS  
CENTURIES OF CALAMITIES  
WHEN PAGAN GODS SPOKE  
A "LADY OF GUADALUPE" MIRACLE





## VI

### THE DAYS OF THE VICEROYS

**F**OR nearly three centuries one viceroy followed another. Sometimes months elapsed between them, and during these periods the audiencia or the archbishop assumed control. The viceroys were, for the most part, well-intentioned, but being foreigners, and very temporary, they lacked that patriotic spirit that had the welfare of the country most at heart. At the end of their régime, therefore, after pagan Mexico had had three centuries of Christian civilization, scarcely any steps toward progress had been made.

This was due to no one cause. The fleeting rule of each viceroy, and his absorbing interest in the accumulation of gold for himself during his brief stay, that he might ever after live in affluence, had more than all else to do with it; but there were, too, other causes. Throughout all the years there was constant friction between the Church and the viceroy; there were innumerable insurrections of native tribes in various parts of the colony; there were a great number of natural calamities; and during practically the entire

viceregal period the coasts were infested by pirates and the interior harassed by bandits.

Gold-laden galleons sailing from this land of incredible wealth lured sea-rovers from all parts of the world. English pirates, French, Dutch, all lay in wait somewhere among the Bahamas to swoop upon the heavily-freighted treasure-ships. These swash-bucklers, with all the glamour of romance that surrounds them, were often no more than cut-throat villains. Some were mere adventure-seekers, sailing the seas for the very zest that came from buccaneering; many were knighted for successful piracy against Spanish galleons.

From the King of Spain there came insatiable demands for gold, and yet more gold; and after the pearl fisheries had been discovered in the Gulf of California, vast quantities of treasure—gold, silver, pearls, turquoise—were shipped by every galleon that sailed from Vera Cruz. A viceroy knew that his popularity at Court depended upon the amount of riches he could send the King; while the Pope's esteem of an archbishop was measured by the quantity of wealth that poured into the coffers of the Vatican.

What better field than this, then, for the pirates who sailed the Spanish Main?

In 1568 Sir John Hawkins and his cousin Francis Drake, too impatient to wait for a treasure-ship to pounce upon, sailed boldly into the harbor of Vera

Cruz, intending to plunder the city; but for once they were outwitted by the Spaniards and barely escaped with but two of their fleet. Ten years later Drake, his *Golden Hynde* heavily laden with treasure from the coast towns of Chile and Peru, sacked the western ports of New Spain, burning the towns and capturing every vessel that came his way. Thomas Cavendish, imitating Drake, sailed along that coast a few years later and left no port untouched, his greatest exploit being the capture of the treasure-ship *Santa Ana* as it was returning to New Spain from the Philippines laden with a rich cargo.

On the east coast the most dreaded buccaneers were Sir Henry Morgan, a Frenchman named Lolonois, and a Dutch and negro half-breed nicknamed "Lorencillo." Their main strongholds were the islands of Jamaica and Tortuga. Esquemeling, a buccaneer under both Lolonois and Morgan, described Tortuga as "the common refuge of all sorts of wickedness, and the seminary, as it were, of pirates and thieves." When gold-laden galleons from New Spain, or ships rich in merchandise for the colony, were far between, the buccaneers went roving the sea in search of prey. Then one of them made the discovery that raids upon the coast towns—Campeche, Vera Cruz, Tampico—were well worth while. First the churches would be sacked and the town pillaged of all the gold and plate and pieces of eight that could be found, then the inhabit-

ants would be tortured into revealing the hiding-place of still more treasure, and finally, lest there be yet more wealth that might escape, a huge ransom would be demanded in lieu of burning the town. Frequently the ransom was paid and the town destroyed nevertheless.

Campeche, in its isolated position, was the victim of every pirate of note who sailed those seas. Lewis Scot received the enormous ransom he demanded, and, being a gentleman, left the city only partially in ruins. Not so the English "Brasiliano," with his cut-throat crew; they murdered, pillaged, burned, without mercy. Sir Henry Morgan came, but a furious storm scattered his ships and saved the city from the ravages of this ruthless pirate. The dreaded French buccaneer, Lolonois, made repeated visits, dashing in, pillaging, and retreating with his booty to Tortuga, there to divide it with all honor and nicety among his villainous men. The pirates, wrote Esquemeling, "observe among themselves very good orders; for in the prizes which they take, it is severely prohibited, to every one, to take anything to themselves: hence all they take is equally divided, as hath been said before: yea, they take a solemn oath to each other, not to conceal the least thing they find among the prizes; and if any one is found false to the said oath, he is immediately turned out of the society"—in what manner is left for the reader to infer. On shipboard "they allow, twice a

day, every one as much as he can eat, without weight or measure; nor does the steward of the vessel give any more flesh, or anything else, to the captain, than to the meanest mariner."

The activities of the sea-marauders became so serious that time and again the Viceroy ordered all coast defenses strengthened, the fort of San Juan de Ulúa, off Vera Cruz, reinforced, and the small defensive armada to be held in constant readiness. Campeche at last realized the necessity for a fortress wall to protect her from the sea-raiders, and in 1686 work was begun upon the thick stone wall the ruins of which are still to be seen.

But the pirates, emboldened by their many successes at Campeche, already had turned their attention to greater prey. And in May, 1683, occurred the famous sack of Vera Cruz.

The inhabitants of this city believed themselves to be well guarded by the strong fort of Ulúa and by the scouting armada, and so they gave small thought to the buccaneers although they well knew the coast was infested by them. When, therefore, toward evening one day two large galleons, flying the Spanish flag, were seen approaching the fort of San Juan de Ulúa, the inhabitants believed them to be part of a merchant fleet then expected with a cargo from Caracas. As it had grown dark, the fort hung out its lights to guide the vessels safely into the harbor, and the



citizens, not expecting the cargo to be unloaded until daylight, went calmly to bed.

But those ships were pirate ships, and long before daylight the terrible Lorencillo and a thousand of his bloodthirsty followers had landed on the sands of Vera Cruz, sacked all the churches, and by four o'clock in the morning were ready to begin upon the inhabitants. Routing them out of their beds, they drove them, terrified and only partially clad, into the plaza and from there imprisoned them in the churches, men, women and children, black and white, six thousand being crowded into the parochial church alone, and there kept for four days under guard while the demons ransacked every house in the town. Conditions in the church became unbearable. The heat was intense, and only those nearest the windows could get air. For three days the prisoners were given neither food nor water, and many, especially women and children, died of suffocation or of starvation. The pirates, feverishly sacking and destroying, were yet not satisfied with their booty, in spite of the fact that it included vast stores of gold, silver and rich merchandise waiting in Vera Cruz to be shipped to Spain in a fleet then expected from Cadiz. Having found so much, they were mad for more. Surely, they believed, this Villa Rica de Vera Cruz must be indeed a city of riches. Men and women were dragged out of the

churches and "tortured with blood and fire" to reveal the hiding-place of still more treasure.

On the fifth day, May 22, laden with booty, the pirates departed, after having committed such atrocious crimes that Lorencillo's name ever after was a word of dread; and even today it is used to frighten little Vera Cruz children.

The value of the spoils in that four-days' sack amounted to several million pesos; in addition the pirates carried off about three thousand prisoners, for slaves and hostages. With this heavy cargo, they set sail to join their fleet, under the command of Agramonte, at the Isle of Sacrifices. Some of the prisoners were liberated, upon the payment of huge ransoms, but three hundred, who had lost their all and could promise no further money, were left to starve on the barren island.

The disheartened inhabitants set to work to rebuild their beloved city of Vera Cruz; and an order was issued that annually a solemn mass should be celebrated in every church to give thanks "for the happy event of the flight of Lorencillo."

For nearly another hundred years the pirates continually infested the coasts of New Spain, raiding especially Campeche and Tampico on the east, and Acapulco on the west. Into Acapulco came the rich galleons from the Philippines, freighted with the wealth of the East; from this port the galleons returned

with an even richer cargo of Mexican silver and Spanish merchandise.

Dutch pirates, under the Prince of Nassau, sacked Acapulco, then calmly took possession of the town; but when they learned that the Viceroy was dispatching troops from the capital they hastily weighed anchor and escaped with their pillaged treasure.

In 1742 an English admiral, George Anson, sighted a galleon on its way from the Philippines to Acapulco, and believing it would be laden with rich merchandise he gave quick pursuit. But he had just come from sacking the coast towns of Peru, and his own ship, the *Centurion*, was so heavy with gold and plate that it was no match for the fleet galleon, with all sails spread, speeding into the harbor of Acapulco. For the galleon had sighted the pirate-ship and though it flew the Spanish flag she was taking no chances. Admiral Anson, frustrated, was nevertheless philosophical. Surely the incoming vessel from the Philippines would be less valuable prey than the outgoing one laden with gold and Spanish doubloons in payment for the merchandise just received. So he would hide the *Centurion* farther along the coast, spy upon the port of Acapulco, and seize the galleon when it set sail on its return voyage. But the Spaniards, too, were doing some spying. Knowing that the pirate-ship was still in the neighborhood, they decided not to return the galleon to the Philippines until the seas should

be cleared of this marauder. Anson, in his supposed hiding-place, waited and waited; but still the galleon did not sail. Month followed month, and at last the English admiral, fearing that he might be losing other valuable prizes, decided to do a little scouting up the coast while waiting for this galleon; for he had no intention of giving her up. During his absence another treasure-ship, *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga*, slipped into Acapulco from the Philippines. Again he had lost a valuable prize. But again he was philosophical. How much better, thought he, to take two gold-laden galleons on their return voyages than one!

The Spaniards, believing the coast clear because of the unmolested arrival of the *Covadonga*, now loaded both galleons with vast quantities of gold and silver and valuable cargo that had been accumulating, and the two vessels set sail together for the Philippines in June, 1743. Anson, dashing out from cover, attacked the galleon nearest him, which happened to be the *Covadonga*, and after a furious battle lasting all day long he captured her, imprisoning her crew upon his own ship, the *Centurion*. In the meantime the second galleon made its escape; but from the *Covadonga* alone Anson was enriched by more than two million pesos in silver besides other precious cargo and three hundred prisoners to be held for ransom. Now satisfied, he made his way to China, and eventually to England, where he was offered the rank of rear-

admiral and refused it that he might enjoy, in private life, the riches gained by piracy.

And while buccaneers swept the seas and fell upon the coast towns, the roads in the interior were infested with highwaymen. For gold and silver were daily being transported from distant mines to Mexico City; and the treasure for the King or the Pope was sent from the capital over the mountainous road to Vera Cruz; while between Acapulco and Mexico a harvest was always to be had in either merchandise arriving from the Spice Islands or gold and plate on its way to the Philippines. So highwaymen formed themselves into bands and lay in wait in the deep barrancas.

One of the noted highwaymen was Santa Cruz Carlos, whose career ended soon after 1794. Having a premonition, perhaps, he left a carefully prepared document—written in illiterate Spanish by one of his band—as to the burial-places of several chests of money and jewels. There is no record of the treasure ever having been found, though many have searched for it. Part of the quaint document reads:

“On the right side of the road from Cocula, just where there are some big stones, two loads of money were taken off the mules. As a further sign: in the fence is a big stone which projects from it and is half-buried in the ground. From this stone you measure twelve yards toward sunset, from the junction of the stone and the wall. Then turn toward the front and





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

**"THE HILL THAT SMOKES"**

Popocatépetl in eruption is a rare sight, and causes among the Indians great fear of their ancient Fire-god.





*Courtesy, Consulado General de México in N. Y.*

### THE CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO CITY

This largest Catholic church in America is built upon the site of the ancient Aztec temple.

measure six yards. Then turn toward sunset, four yards: there the hole was made. A grave, two yards at top, was dug pretty deep, and here the two loads of money were buried, besides three demijohns with money, which we had previously secured on the road to Tepic. I had seven men to help me. Into the hole we lowered the chest, which we covered with slabs. I then ordered Casiano Murillo to jump down, and by my order he was chastised with the penalty of death. He was given two bullets, and he frantically rolled over in his blood with frightful screams. But he soon grew stiff and cold, and remained there to watch the treasure. . . . The grave was filled and a few stones were placed over it."

A further clause states that the finder of this treasure is to pay for twenty-two special masses, including three for Lost Souls in Purgatory. "Likewise he has the obligation to bury in consecrated ground the remains of the man who was left to guard the money." After attending to these small details, the finder may keep the remaining treasure. Six loads of money and a bag of jewels were buried, and all of it, except the money in the demijohns, was captured when Santa Cruz Carlos and his band attacked a pack-train in a lonely canyon.

Highwaymen were for the most part half-breeds and there was about them little of the dash, little of the picturesque romance, that clung to the pirates of the sea.

While buccaneers and bandits were almost continuously active during the long period of the viceroys in New Spain they were, after all, but incidental. The outstanding features of the nearly three centuries were the unusual number of calamities, both natural and avoidable, that depleted the native population; and the growing power of the Church in purely secular affairs. The clergy were in constant and often serious conflict with the viceroy or his audiencia, but little by little they were gaining the upper hand, until eventually it became understood that, in the absence of a viceroy, the archbishop and not the audiencia should be in supreme control.

By 1573 the Church had become so important in Mexico that the Pope gave his permission for the erection of a worthy cathedral—today the largest on the American continent. Accordingly the first stone was laid by Archbishop Moya de Contreras, who two years previously had arrived to establish in New Spain the terrible Inquisition, dreaded especially by Protestants and Jews, who were burned to death upon the flimsiest of excuses, and by those Catholics who might possibly be hiding a few silver coins that should go to feed the voracious coffers of the Church. The Cathedral was dedicated nearly a century later, and rededicated in 1668 with an elaborate *auto da fé*.

This Cathedral of Mexico City stands almost upon the site of the Aztec *teocalli*, which the Spanish con-

quistadores were so quick to destroy when they came into possession of the city. Not until 1525 did they take time from their mad search for hidden treasure to build a church, and then, that it might be done with the utmost dispatch, they chose a site adjoining the débris of the *teocalli*, that the building-stones of the pagan temple might be convenient for their use. The atrium of the present cathedral marks the site of this first church. When, in 1530, Zumárraga was appointed Bishop of Mexico the little church was dignified with the name cathedral, but five years later its name was changed, and after the partial erection of the larger and finer cathedral it was destroyed. The present cathedral, including the towers, was not completed until 1791, nearly two and a quarter centuries after the cornerstone was laid. It is believed that its foundation consists almost entirely of building stones, many of them sculptured with hieroglyphics and pagan deities, taken from the débris of the Aztec *teocalli*.

Buried deep in the soil at the base of the West Tower of the Cathedral the workmen found, in 1790, the famous *Calendario Azteca* which had been hurled down by the Spaniards from the top of the *teocalli*. This Calendar Stone, now in the *Museo nacional*, Mexico City, is one of the most interesting of all the relics of pagan Mexico. It is formed of a solid piece of porphyry, somewhat resembling a huge millstone, twelve feet in diameter, three feet thick, and weigh-

ing about twenty-four tons. In the center is the Aztec symbol of the Sun-god, Tonatiuh, and around this figure in concentric circles are the four elements, earth, air, fire and water, the four past epochs of the universe, the four seasons, the days and weeks and months of the year, the years of a cycle, and many other pictographic symbols, the entire face of the stone being a mass of elaborate and exquisitely symmetrical carving. Each symbol is placed with geometric exactness and proportioned according to its importance. The stone is a marvelous evidence of the knowledge of astronomy to which the Aztecs had attained.

An interesting feature of the Calendar Stone is the four "Suns" or past epochs of the universe, the central figure of Tonatiuh representing the present epoch. In the beginning of all things, the Aztecs believed, the great god Tezcatlipocâ decided that there should be a world, and after turning himself into the sun he brought forth life from the earth and created a race of giants. That was the epoch of *Four Jaguar*. After several thousand years the giants became so negligent in their worship of the gods that a plague of ferocious jaguars was sent to earth to destroy them. But a few giants had hidden themselves away in caves, and they escaped, to be the progenitors of the next race, which lived in the epoch of *Four Wind*. Quetzalcoatl now had become the sun. But in time, after many thousand years, this race, too, grew careless in



their worship, and violent hurricanes came and destroyed them. The few men and women who were not killed were turned into monkeys. The next epoch was the *Four Rain*, when Tlaloc, the Rain-god, agreed to become the sun. Gradually through the centuries the monkey-people became human beings. But again the gods were angered, and this time a rain of fire descended upon the earth, and only a few escaped by swimming in the lakes. The goddess Chalchihuitlicue now agreed to represent the sun, and a new epoch, the *Four Water*, began. It ended with a great deluge in which all men were turned into fishes and all the earth was covered with water. After that came the present epoch, *Four Motion*, which, the Aztecs believed, will end in earthquakes.

Axayacatl ordered the construction of the Calendar Stone in 1479, and then, in order to have a large number of victims for its worthy dedication, he began a war upon Michoacan, setting out from Mexico with twenty-four thousand troops. But the Michoacans were more than equal to the occasion, and Axayacatl returned with barely two hundred of his great army. Elaborate funeral ceremonies were held for the thousands who had fallen, and during this celebration the Calendar Stone was dedicated in 1481. Axayacatl shortly afterward died, from grieving over the loss of his army.

About a year after the unearthing of the *Calendario*



*Azteca* at the base of the Cathedral tower, another priceless Aztec relic was found buried near the south-west corner of the atrium. This was the Sacrificial Stone, or *Temalacatl*, a huge cylindrical stone, nearly nine feet in diameter and two and three-fourths feet thick, and elaborately carved around the rim with fifteen scenes from the victories of Tizoc, the brother and successor of Axayacatl. The face of the stone was intended for a sundial; its symbols closely resembling those on the *Calendario Azteca*. No doubt it originally adorned the magnificent gardens of King Tizoc; when it was taken to the *teocalli* to become the dread sacrificial stone is unknown; but on it thousands of Indians and many Spaniards were sacrificed to Huitzilopochtli, the terrible War-god of the Aztecs. The victims were stretched across the stone, their hearts torn out and offered, still palpitating, to the War-god, their bodies eaten at a great banquet, and their skulls carefully preserved, stacked away in a chamber dedicated to that purpose or used in the decoration of the *teocalli*.

"There were thirtie steppes of thirtie fadome long; vpon the toppe of these steppes there was a walke thirtie foote broad, all plaistered with chalke, in the midst of which walke was a Pallissado artificially made of very high trees, planted in order a fadome one from another. These trees were very bigge, and all pierced with small holes from the foote to the toppe, and

there were roddees did runne from one tree to another, to the which were chained or tied many dead mens heades. Vpon every rod were twentie sculles, and these ranckes of sculles continue from the foote to the toppe of the tree. This Pallissado was full of dead mens sculles from one end to the other, the which was a wonderfull mournefull sight and full of horror."

In one temple alone the companions of Cortés counted 136,000 skulls, computed by the even rows and stacks that filled the room.

When the Spaniards were destroying the *teocalli*, they hurled the Sacrificial Stone down off the temple as a loathsome thing; and it lay in the débris until some priests saw it and quickly had it buried lest the mere sight of it awaken bloodthirsty instincts in the hearts of their new converts. So closely was the secret of its hiding-place guarded that nearly three centuries passed before it was found by workmen, in 1791. Knowing nothing of its history, and caring nothing for art—for it is a beautiful piece of work—they began to cut it up to make paving-blocks. The deep groove which so spoils its lovely symmetry was made by them before the stone was rescued by a passing priest. It is now in the *Museo nacional*, Mexico.

Many of the Indians who outwardly professed Christianity, for politic or other reasons, during the Spanish régime, were secretly worshiping their own idols, their temples being hidden caves or isolated spots

in the mountains. Some there were who were true converts. Others actually believed in the white man's God, and regularly attended mass, but as zealously worshiped in secret their Aztec or Maya gods. Any Indian discovered worshiping an idol after once having been baptized was burned to death in the Inquisition's terrible *autos da fé*. But in spite of this the ancient religions could not be stamped out; they had their devotees especially in the mountains of Oaxaca and Nayarit, and even today there are caves and sanctuaries, wholly unknown to white men, where the ancient Maya-Quiché or Nahuatl idols are regularly worshiped.

The padres were unflagging in their zeal, however; and it is to their efforts alone that most of the exploration of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is directly due. This is especially true of the Jesuits, who first arrived in Mexico in 1572, and were expelled from the country in 1767.

One of these Jesuits, Padre Kino, engraved his name for all time upon the history of Sonora and Arizona. The Indians adored him, and news about him was flashed from tribe to tribe, so that wherever he went he was received cordially even by otherwise hostile Indians. In his wanderings he discovered many of the ancient, long-prehistoric ruins in which perhaps the earliest Mexicans had lived at some time during their migration toward the Valley of Anáhuac. Padre Kino

established missions along the coast of the Gulf of California, and then by following up the coast discovered that Baja California was a peninsula and not, as had been believed, an island.

As word reached Mexico of new territories entered by the padres, and their discovery of new mines which the Indians were working, the viceroy then in office hurriedly sent out military expeditions to follow in the footsteps of the missionaries. Thus the land was opened up, colonies were planted, tributes exacted, and the status of the Indians changed from that of freedom to virtual slavery.

The natives were not submitting mildly. Much of the territory was gained, lost, and regained, with a great deal of bloodshed. The Jesuit missionaries advancing alone, unaccompanied by soldiers, had little trouble, partly because of their friendly attitude and largely because of the superstitious awe in which the Indians held them. Padre Ortega, who followed Kino into Nayarit and wrote a history of their struggles and their achievements, says their first act on entering strange territory was invariably to accomplish a "miracle." This usually took the form of an amazingly quick return to health of some Indian about to die. The padre hurried to a supposed deathbed. For a long time he intoned, "in a gentle and sweet voice," the various creeds of the Catholic Church, not omitting information about His Holiness, the Pope; then

held the crucifix to the dying Indian's lips and sprinkled him with holy water. Following this came anxious hours while the padre waited to see the result; for if this first and vastly important "miracle" should fail and the patient die, the missionary would be driven from the country. The Indians would have none of him.

Fortunately, however, due to personal magnetism on the part of the padre and the strong credulity of the native, whose very faith brought about the miracle, this extraordinary healing of the sick rarely failed, and the padres were hailed throughout the territory as messengers of the gods, and soon had many converts. Once they had gained the confidence of the natives, the soldiers and colonists then had less difficulty in moving in. Padre Kino, Ortega states, was especially successful in working miracles; but Ortega gives all the credit to the wisdom of the Blessed Virgin. Where she wanted missions to be established she caused the miraculous recovery; but where she was unwilling for the Spaniards to enter at that time, she permitted the sick to die.

The Count of Monterey, as viceroy, sent out many expeditions of discovery and conquest. One of these, under Juan de Oñate, wrought havoc in New Mexico in 1595. Another was sent to California; while Sebastián Vizcaino was commissioned to explore the California coast. Coming upon a beautiful bay—

which Cabrillo had discovered sixty years previously—Vizcaino named it the Bay of Monterey, in honor of the Viceroy.

Several expeditions had been sent into New Mexico during the last half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, the Franciscan missionaries being largely responsible for the acquisition of this territory; just as they were responsible for its loss in 1680 when the Pueblo Indians revolted against the excessive tributes exacted of them and especially against interference with their age-old religious rites—their dance to the Fire-god, their Snake dances, their morning and evening reverence of the Sun. More than four hundred Spaniards were massacred in this uprising, and it was ten years before the white men won their way back into the lost colony and, by a milder régime, subdued the Pueblos.

In 1690 an expedition was hastily sent against a French colony which had established itself on the Texas coast. The French already had abandoned their settlement; and so, finding it a pleasant country, the Spaniards began to establish missions and presidios of their own. In 1727 the country, with its limits most indefinite, became officially a province of New Spain, and was named for the tribe of Indians, the Texas, found roaming its plains.

While occasional viceroys, being hard pressed by the King to open up new wealth-producing regions,



were thus sending out exploring parties, and the Church was carrying on its zealous work of spreading Christianity, the country was racked by one calamity after another during the three centuries of the viceroys. Most of these disasters could have been avoided.

Time and again the city of Mexico was inundated because of broken dykes, or of torrential rains which caused the lake to overflow and submerge the streets. In 1602 the Viceroy, Mendoza, ordered that both the city and the valley be protected by the building of extensive dykes; but property owners, enriching themselves by exploiting the natives, were unwilling to have the Indians withdrawn from the mines and fields for this public work, and so the Viceroy's plan was opposed and he had to content himself with the repairing of existing canals and dykes. But scarcely was this accomplished when a tremendous flood from the lake swept over the city and kept it inundated for weeks, causing much damage to property and untold misery among the poor. Mendoza now decided to change the location of the capital to Tacubaya; but here again he was opposed, for many of the most influential inhabitants had their wealth tied up in property in Mexico City and would not consider beginning all over again in Tacubaya or elsewhere. One thing this excellent Viceroy did accomplish, however, was the planning and the actual beginning of an aqueduct

to bring drinking water from the clear springs on the heights of Chapultepec into the city of Mexico.

When another disastrous flood swept the city, Mendoza's successor began the protecting dykes which had so strongly been opposed. Even now, however, the work was not carried to completion; and so, in 1629, the city was submerged by the worst flood it ever had known, and which lasted for more than a year. Thirty thousand Indians perished in this disaster. In every deluge it was the natives who suffered most, from starvation or exposure, their wretched huts of cane and leaves being swept away with the first inrush of the waters. After this disaster, with its great loss of life—of natives who were needed in the mines and fields to gather treasure for the royal coffers—the King himself ordered the removal of the capital to higher ground; but with judicious bribing the influential property owners again had their way, promising this time, however, to see that the building of the dykes was carried forward.

But floods were not the only disasters that were taking tremendous toll among the natives. Famine and disease were garnering their thousands.

The greatest scourge in Mexican history was a deadly and mysterious sickness that swept the land in 1576 and left no part of New Spain untouched. The priests called it typhoid; but it was too rapid, too deadly for that; it probably was cholera brought in

by way of the Philippines. The Indians perished by the tens of thousands; and then when the disease at last had run its course there followed famine with its attendant miseries. For so many had been stricken that none were left to work in the fields or even to gather the wild crops.

Such deadly sickness was occurring in Vera Cruz, because of the unhealthful location of the city, that the Viceroy ordered its removal, in 1599, to the site originally chosen by Cortés, and which it occupies to-day. An English writer who visited the country just previous to the removal of the city speaks of "a towne called Vera Cruz, standing by a rivers side, where all the factours of the Spanish merchants dwell which receive the goods of such ships as come hither, and also lade the same with such treasure and merchandise as they retorne back into Spaine. They are in number about foure hundred, who onely remaine there during the time that the Spanish fleet dischargeth and is loden againe. . . . And then for the unwholesomeness of the place they depart thence sixteene leagues further up within the countrey, to a towne called Zapala, a very healthfull soile."

Famine did not always wait to fall in the wake of floods or disease. Often there was a total absence of rain, and the crops withered and died; more often a torrential downpour or a hailstorm destroyed the grain. During one great famine, that began in 1691

and lasted for more than a year, the Indians were dying in such numbers that the Viceroy began a search for hoarded grain, seizing it to distribute among the starving natives; but his intentions were misinterpreted, the grain-hoarders believing he was taking the maize for himself, to store in the royal granaries and sell at an exorbitant price. Murmurings grew into mutiny; and the infuriated crowd, armed mostly with sticks and stones, and gathering in numbers as it went, marched against the palace. Troops quickly dispersed the mob; but news of this insurrection reached other parts of the country, and there also armed mobs soon were attacking the houses of the wealthy. In this upheaval the colony remained until fortunately a superabundance of crops the following year brought the much-needed food.

The frequent famines and the many deadly epidemics were making vast inroads upon the native population of New Spain; but almost as effective were two wholly criminal causes that were decreasing the Indians by the thousands. One was their treatment in the mines and in the sugar and tobacco fields; this was no less than murder on a large scale, for the Spanish lash drove the Indians utterly beyond human powers of endurance. The other was the concentration law, which compelled the natives to congregate in towns, where the Spanish eye might be upon them. Indians who had lived in the open country, accustomed to fresh

air and the wide spaces, had to give up their homes, their freedom, and huddle together in the crowded, unsanitary quarters to which they were driven. Thousands died under the concentration law.

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions added their share to the general calamities of the viceregal period. The most severe earthquake in Mexico City was in 1711. With the first tremors, the churchbells began to ring of their own accord, and as the disturbance grew in violence so the bells clashed more loudly. The terrified natives, never having witnessed an earthquake in which churchbells figured, believed it was their ancient god Quetzalcoatl calling to them. Shedding their veneered Christianity, they quickly prostrated themselves to pray to the gods of their forefathers.

Any natural phenomenon awakened in them the utmost terror, for they could connect it only with the Aztec gods who, they believed, were thus showing their anger. A total eclipse of the sun in 1691, in which the stars became plainly visible in midmorning, so frightened the Indians that they rushed to their hidden shrines, prostrated themselves, and raised their voices in a chant of glorification to the Sun-god. And the fact that the eclipse then passed and the sun again smiled down upon them only convinced them of their error in deserting this visible god of their fathers for the unknown and unseen god of the priests.





*Photo., Casanova*

### IN THE SHADOW OF ORIZABA

Girdled by blue hills and flooded with golden sun, the city of San Andrés Chalchicomula lies in a valley of its own.



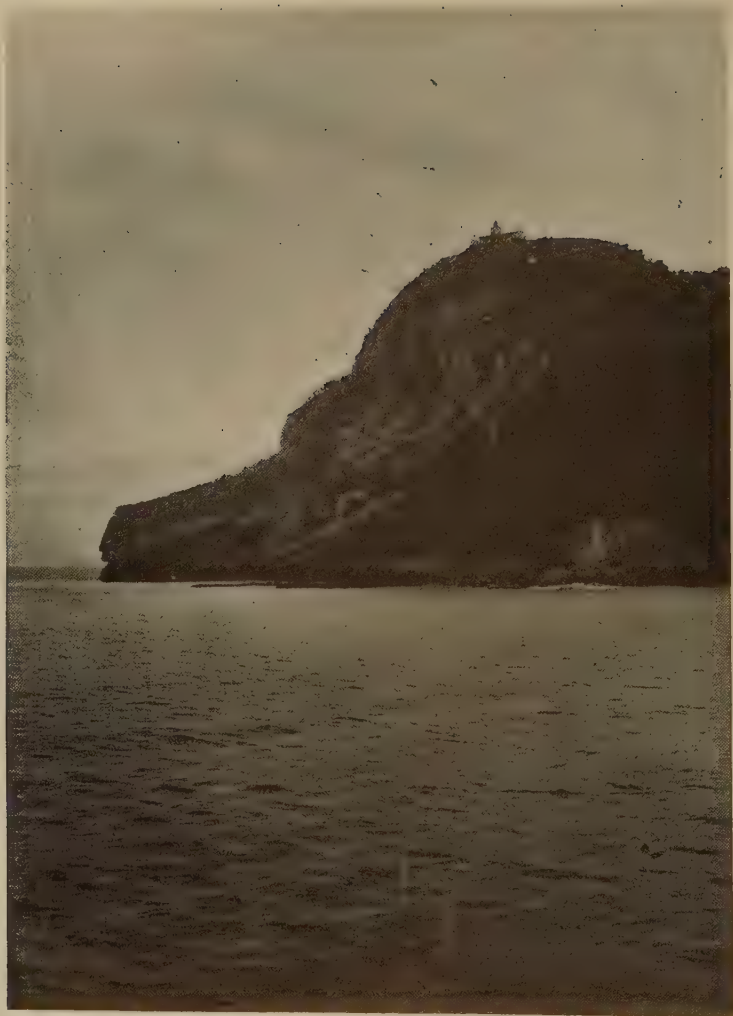


*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

#### WHERE GULF AND OCEAN MEET

This strange creature at Mazatlan keeps watch with his right eye  
over the Gulf of California while his left eye scans  
the limitless stretch of the Pacific.

A previous eclipse, 1684, had been even more portentous. There had appeared in Mexico one Antonio Benavides who had been sent from Spain as *visitador*—which meant virtually official spy to report upon the viceroy and the audiencia. Great mystery surrounded this man. He was received by the audiencia with the utmost cordiality, and then, with no explanation, thrust into prison in Puebla. After a year in the dungeon he was returned to Mexico to be hanged in the public plaza. His head and both hands were then cut off; one hand was nailed to the gallows, the other hand and the head sent to Puebla for exhibition. But the large crowd of Indians that had gathered in the plaza to witness the execution did not remain for the gruesome aftermath; for at the very moment the hanging was consummated, the sun, which had been getting more and more darkened, was totally eclipsed, and the natives fled from the plaza in the wildest terror.

An eruption of the giant volcano, Popocatépetl, in 1716, was an indication that the Earth-monster was angry, and much of the patient teachings of the priests tottered before this fiery message from the Aztec gods. In 1752 there was an eruption of the volcano of Colima which was followed by an eclipse of the sun, and that in turn was followed by the supernatural, Spaniards as well as Indians believed, burning of the church of Santa Clara, in Mexico City. When, a few years later, an Aurora Borealis appeared, the fright-

ened Indians believed that the Sky-gods were getting ready to rain fire upon them.

While these natural phenomena were steadily undermining the new faith of the natives, the recurrence of famines and pestilences did much to increase that faith; for the work of the priests in every disaster that fell most heavily upon the poor is an unvarying record of splendid and disinterested service. They were untiring in their efforts to succor the stricken, they were fearless in the presence of contagion, their own food was shared with the needy. And this spirit so truly Christian, this unselfish devotion, more than all else helped to win new converts and to strengthen the faith of those already brought into the fold.

But even as the Jesuit padres doing pioneer work in Sonora resorted to "miracles" so in Mexico City the priests were still reaching the Indians through their credulity and their age-long superstition. In 1737 an epidemic of yellow fever ravaged the country, causing in Mexico City alone fifty thousand deaths. The Archbishop craftily waited until it had about run its course, and then an elaborate ceremony was held in the Cathedral, and Our Lady of Guadalupe was declared by the Archbishop, by the Viceroy and all the multitude to be the patron saint of the country and its protector from pestilence. The Virgin responded promptly, for within a few weeks not a vestige of the fever remained.

Thus the days of the viceroys went eventfully by, with little of lasting note to mark their progress. But Mexico was on the threshold of a new era. Long before the close of the eighteenth century a powerful nation was springing up where before there had been but downtrodden natives and grasping Spaniards. The last of the viceroys was in 1821. By 1767, when the King of Spain made his fatal mistake of expelling the Jesuits, the colony already was yearning to have some voice in matters which affected it so vitally; the seeds of independence, kept hidden in dark corners perforce, had nevertheless sprouted and were only waiting their chance to be brought forth to the light.



## VII. THE BATTLE-CRY OF FREEDOM

THE GREED FOR GOLD  
THE EXILE OF THE JESUITS  
MURMURINGS OF REVOLUTION  
THE INSURRECTION OF THE MACHETES  
THE FATE OF ITURRIGARAY  
"EL GRITO DE DOLORES"  
THE BANNER OF FREEDOM  
THE MASSACRE AT GUANAJUATO  
AT THE GATES OF THE CAPITAL  
A FRIGHTFUL REVENGE  
THE EXECUTION OF HIDALGO  
THE GREAT MORELOS  
THE TREACHERY OF ITURBIDE  
THE LAST OF THE VICEROYS  
THE FIRST EMPIRE  
THE REPUBLIC OF MEXICO





## VII

### THE BATTLE-CRY OF FREEDOM

THE Church in New Spain, during the days of the viceroys, had many excellent representatives, but their work was accomplished under severe handicaps. For there came, almost continuously and with increasing insistence, a demand for excessive tributes from the natives. The Pope, fearful lest more of the Mexican gold and the California pearls find their way into the coffers of the King than into those of the Vatican, was insatiable in his demands. This extortion, for it was no less, was fast overshadowing much of the good accomplished by the faithful friars. Even as far back as 1570 writers were denouncing it. "In the yeere 1568, in the moneth of March, being desirous to see the world," John Chilton set out for New Spain, which he calls the Indies. In his "Notable Discourse" he says:

"From the yere of 1570, which was the yeere that the Popes buls came into the Indies, the Pope hath received both of the Indians which are tributaries unto him, and also of all others belonging to the Incommenderos, of every one being above twelve yeeres of age, foure reals of every bull. Also they carry other pardons with them into the Indies, for such as be dead, although an hun-

dred yeres before the Spanyards came into the countrey: which pardons the friars in their preachings perswaded the poore Indians to take, telling them that with giving foure reals of plate for a Masse, they would deliver their soules out of purgatory. Of the Christians likewise dwelling there he hath foureteene reals for every bull. . . . The revenue of his buls after this manner yeeldeth unto his treasury yeerely above three millions of gold, as I have bene credibly informed, although of late both the Spanyards and Indians do refuse to take the buls; for that they perceive he doth make a yeerely custome of it: onely ech Indian taketh one pardon for all his householde (whereas in former time every Indian used to take one for every person in his house) and teareth the same into small pieces, and giveth to every one of his householde a little piece, saying thus, they neede now no more, seeing in that which they bought the yeere before thay had above ten thousand yeres pardon."

This same writer declared that in the valley to the southwest of Mexico City "the Indians for the most parte go naked, and are wilde people. Their common armour is bowes and arrows: they use to eate up such Christians as they come by."

Thus even in these early years of the colony, both natives and Spaniards were rebelling against the extortionate demands made upon them for money, not only for the Pope but for the King as well, to carry on his foreign wars and to pay for the frivolities of his extravagant Court. In the following two centuries this feeling of injustice grew so strong that it needed

but one spark to light an unquenchable fire of rebellion. That spark was applied by Charles III in 1767 with his order for the expulsion of the Jesuits. The feeble excuse given was that these padres were becoming enormously wealthy—those in California from the pearl fisheries, and those in Sonora from mines—and that they were concealing this wealth for their own uses instead of turning it over to the Church and the State. The blow fell suddenly and dramatically. The military authorities in the various scattered presidios near Jesuit missions received sealed orders which were not to be opened till midnight of June 25. At dawn the next morning all padres were arrested simultaneously, with no warning, no chance to hide further treasure. They were sent to Vera Cruz, and from there shipped to Spain.

The populace was aghast at this sudden exile of the Jesuits, for the padres were greatly loved and respected everywhere. Uprisings were threatened in all parts of the country where they had worked; but the Viceroy was prepared for this, and his troops acted promptly. In the capital a Prohibition signed by him was posted on all public buildings, forbidding any conversation or discussion regarding this act, and ending: "The vassals of the Great Monarch who occupies the Throne of Spain must know that they were born to obey, and not to discuss or give opinions upon any act of the Government."

Nevertheless tongues were not to be quieted, and the very fact that the conversations must be carried on in secret gave the matter an importance that open discussion never would have had. Notes of indignation were written and passed from one to another, and a few of these notes were daringly posted beneath the Viceroy's Prohibition.

The undercurrent of dissatisfaction among the colonists of all ranks was too apparent for its seriousness not to be understood by the Viceroy, and he appealed to Spain for further troops. These arrived in 1768, with large stores of munitions. This was the first regularly organized army in New Spain. And it came none too soon, for it was needed at once to quell an uprising in Sinaloa and Sonora, where the Jesuits had done the pioneer work of exploration and conquest and where they had been much loved.

The viceroys, with one exception, had all been foreigners. They had ruled as kings, surrounded by a privileged class similar to the nobility in the Old World. And this privileged class had consisted invariably of men from Spain who had come to Mexico with the sole purpose of gathering a fortune for themselves to carry back to Spain. From the earliest days the Indians had called these foreigners *Gatzopins*, or centaurs, from their first belief that man and horse were one. This name, corrupted into *Gachupines*, was now applied to all those in Mexico who had been born

in Spain, and that meant the privileged classes, for the Viceroy and the Spaniards surrounding him saw to it that all public offices or other favors went to their own nationals.

But there had grown up in New Spain a powerful class, born on Mexican soil and as deeply patriotic as the Indians themselves. These were the *Creoles*, of pure Spanish descent, with unmixed blood, but sons of Mexico, not of Spain. There was still another class, the *Mestizos*, or mixed-breeds, but these were mere followers where the *Creoles* led.

By the end of the eighteenth century the most powerful factor in the unrest and utter dissatisfaction in the colony was the bitter hatred between the *Gachupines* and the *Creoles*. This was due to the unfairness, the partiality shown to the *Gachupines*, and the consequent condescension with which this privileged class regarded the *Creoles*. Often a newly arrived Spaniard, knowing nothing of the country and caring nothing for its welfare, would be put into a highly important office while a *Creole*, far better fitted for the position, would be cast aside solely because he had been born in Mexico. This was carried even into the churches, the favors going always to Spaniards, while the Mexican-born were looked upon with scorn. Thus the hatred of the *Creoles* grew, and it was intense. And in this they were not alone; for the *Mesti-*



zos and the natives, too, hated the Spaniards, the privileged Gachupines.

Secret meetings of indignation, led by Creoles, were being held all over the colony. In 1799 the Insurrection of the Machetes was suppressed by the Viceroy before it actually had materialized. In this conspiracy it was planned to kill the Viceroy, expel from New Spain every Gachupine, and proclaim the absolute independence of the country.

For a few brief days class hatred was forgotten while all the colony joined in the elaborate funeral ceremonies of a former viceroy, Count de Revillagigedo, whose actual funeral already had taken place a few weeks previously in Spain. Revillagigedo had been one of the excellent viceroys who had done much for the colony. His expeditions of exploration had gone as far north as Alaska, where one of the most beautiful islands still bears his name. It was customary, when the news of the death of any great man reached Mexico, to have three days of public mourning, which, however, resembled far more a joyous *fiesta*; for following the elaborate ceremony in the Cathedral, and the procession through the main streets, the populace gave itself over to that spirit of gala abandon which is the birthright of all Latins. When a king of Spain died, the ceremonies in Mexico were elaborate indeed, and were surpassed only by the days of *fiesta* when the new king was crowned.

Shortly after the suppressed Insurrection of the Machetes a Tepic Indian felt that now, when white man was ranged against white man, Creole against Gachupine, would be an opportune time to restore the ancient kingdom of the Aztecs, and so win back for the Indians the land that was rightfully theirs. Secretly, by those mysterious methods that Indians have of communicating with one another, messages were sent to all the Nahuan tribes; their insurrection was to be simultaneous, sudden, and decisive. But two little native children in Guadalajara, boasting of the time when the land would be theirs, were overheard by a Spaniard, and soon the plot was out. The audiencia at Guadalajara notified the Viceroy, and his troops by quick action dispelled the insurrectos, although the leader escaped, to stir up further trouble among the Nayarits.

In Yucatan an uprising had been more successful. An Indian named Jacinto Canek had gathered together a large band of Mayas and swept upon the little Spanish settlement at Cisteil. The handful of white men fled; and the joyous Canek proclaimed himself King of Yucatan. But one cannot be a king without a crown. The pretty Maya girls of the village wove him a diadem of scarlet hibiscus blossoms. It was vastly becoming and King Canek was about to ascend his outdoor throne in the midst of the village when some of his followers made a great discovery. In the Cath-

olic church—every village has an elaborate church however mean its houses—was an image of the Virgin Mary, and on her head a crown of exquisitely wrought gold set with many jewels. With elaborate ceremonies, then, this crown of the Virgin was placed upon the head of King Canek while the diadem of hibiscus blossoms adorned the head of the prettiest Maya maiden, who was forthwith chosen to be his queen. The reign of King Canek lasted three days, and then the Spanish troops marched in and the new king fled back to the forests of southern Yucatan, taking with him his golden crown and, perhaps, his hibiscus-blossom queen.

In Oaxaca the Zapotecs, those greatest fighters and staunchest friends, openly allied themselves with the Creoles. They had little use for the strangers who crossed the seas only to exploit the natives and garner treasure to carry back to Spain.

Thus throughout all the colony there was unrest and discontent. Spain was so immersed in foreign wars that she could scarcely bestow a thought upon Mexico. And these very wars of hers were in no small way responsible for the eventual independence of the colony; for wars require money, and no sooner had the Mexicans given of their very utmost than further millions were demanded of them, and still further millions.

In this state was Mexico when one of her most

notorious viceroys, José de Iturrigaray, arrived in 1803. He was clever enough to appreciate at once the real situation in the colony, and was mercenary enough to decide to take immediate advantage of it. He would make hay, with straws of gold, while the feeble sun of Spain still shone. He set up for himself a court of great magnificence and splendor, that he might live in the utmost luxury during his brief stay; at the same time he began a systematic effort to enrich himself for the future, appropriating public funds, levying taxes for his own capacious pockets, and making his government so generally obnoxious that even the Gachupines began to murmur.

Then, in 1808, came news of Napoleon's invasion of Spain and the abdication of Charles IV. Having now no Spanish sovereign abroad, and feeling that they owed no allegiance to the French, the Mexicans asked Iturrigaray to declare the independence of the colony. This he was willing, even quite eager, to do; for thus, he thought, he would become the ruler of the new nation and so live in luxury and power all his life. But he had not reckoned upon the Gachupines. They were thoroughly alarmed. The independence of Mexico would mean the ascendancy of the Creoles and the weakening of the power of the Spaniards, who would thus have no viceroy, no Spanish Court, to show them partiality and bestow favors upon them. The Gachupines had no desire for an independent Mexico. They

conspired together, seized Iturrigaray, shipped him summarily and protesting back to Spain, and chose as his successor a man of feeble health and weak will who would be constantly under their control.

They little reckoned that this very act was one of the strongest steps they could have taken toward the achievement of the very independence they were endeavoring to thwart. The person of a viceroy, the ruler of the land, had been considered inviolable by a nation accustomed always to vassalage; yet here was a viceroy who had been seized and hustled out of the country! If Spaniards showed such disrespect to their own royalty, why should Mexicans submit to the rule of a stranger!

No longer secretly now, but openly, mass-meetings were being held, plans laid, juntas formed. The imprisonment of a rebel leader—and this was a daily happening—but added new recruits to the cause of freedom.

The first actual blow for independence fell on September 16, 1810—a date ever after glorified in Mexican history.

In the little town of Dolores, in Guanajuato, a powerful junta was working secretly for the liberation of the country; and at its head was the parish curate, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. The plans of the insurgents were being carefully laid; and in all the leading cities groups were being formed to strike simul-





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### THE LAND OF PERPETUAL SNOW

In the upper reaches of Orizaba, even beyond the pines and junipers, there are flaming flowers between patches of snow.





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### A LITTLE BURDEN-BEARER

The hut behind him, built of reeds and thatched with leaves, is his home, which he shares with the chickens and the family pig.

taneously. Captain Allende, a fearless soldier, an able military leader, a stanch patriot, was chosen as generalissimo of the army; but the leading spirit was Hidalgo, and Allende was generalissimo only in name.

The coup had been planned for the early part of December, when all Mexico would be in *fiesta* in honor of the celebrated Virgin of Guadalupe, and in the crowds who gathered in the towns, the leaders of the revolution could gain many recruits by raising the banner of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* and declaring this much-venerated Virgin to be the protectress of the cause of liberty.

All was going well with the revolutionists. For weeks they had been working and not a word of their secret had reached the Viceroy or the Gachupines. It was now September, and in December all would be in readiness for simultaneous action throughout the entire colony. But now one of their captains, peeved at what he considered a slight, turned traitor and disclosed their plans. Before the Viceroy could realize the seriousness of the uprising, a friend hastened to Hidalgo with warning that they had been betrayed. A conference of the revolutionary leaders was called at once, and took place in Dolores on the night of September 15. Each of the patriots present had his own suggestions to make, and all were trying to present them together, when Hidalgo interrupted.

"This is not the time for talk," he said. "We must

act, and act quickly. We can reserve our discussion until later."

The good curate, in addition to his spiritual activities, had a thriving porcelain factory and a factory where for many months he had been manufacturing machetes and lances—pending the time when they would be needed for this very purpose. Now calling together all his workmen he told them his intention of striking the blow for liberty at once. Then, the day beginning to dawn, he had the churchbell—now preserved as Independence Bell—rung calling the people to Sunday morning mass an hour earlier than usual. When the curious throng assembled, however, it was not mass that was said, for more worldly matters needed consideration on that morning of September 16, 1810. The curate addressed the crowd in impassioned words, ending with his famous Cry of Dolores: "*Viva la Independencia! Viva América! Muera el mal Gobierno!*"\* To this the multitude added, with one voice: "*Mueran los Gachupines!*" And the "Grito de Dolores" became the war-cry of the revolutionists through all the years of the War of Independence.

At the head of six hundred patriots Hidalgo set out a few hours later, and as he passed the little town of Atotonilco he took from the chapel a banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe and attaching it to his lance

\* "Viva Independence! Viva America! Death to bad government!"

raised it on high, crying, "*Viva Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe!*" The wildest enthusiasm spread among his followers, and thenceforth the war for liberty became a holy war and the sacred picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe the banner for freedom. With the Virgin marching at their head, Hidalgo told his credulous army, there could be nothing but glorious victory.

At the end of the first day Captain Allende and his troops joined them; and for a while the insurgents swept all before them. At Celaya "*Mueran los Gachupines!*" was on every tongue, and the houses of the Spaniards were broken into, looted, and ruthlessly destroyed.

When they reached Guanajuato the insurgents met with the first resistance, the Gachupines fighting them no less determinedly than the government troops; but little by little the royalists were driven back and finally took refuge, with their families and their treasure, including the royal funds, in the fortified Alhóndiga de Granaditas. This stronghold was assaulted again and again by the revolutionists. Massed Indians rushed the barricades, only to be mowed down with frightful carnage by volleys from within. But Our Lady of Guadalupe was their banner. There could be no defeat. In one assault Riaño, the royalist leader in the Alhóndiga, was killed, and within the stronghold all soon became confusion. At last the situation seemed

desperate and a white flag was raised in token of surrender. The revolutionists, mad with the joy of success, rushed forward. And into their very midst came a volley of grenades; for Riaño's son, ignorant of the surrender, had ordered his troops to fire. But the insurgents believed it to be treachery, the white flag a trap; and nothing then could stay them. The entire garrison in the Alhóndiga was massacred mercilessly.

Now drunk with blood, and enriched by five million pesos in gold and silver found in the Alhóndiga, Hidalgo's army of many thousand untrained, undisciplined men armed mostly with machetes and lances, swept on. Valladolid, now Morelia, fell without a struggle, and here Hidalgo appropriated to the cause of freedom a half-million pesos which he found in the church's treasury.

In Mexico the Viceroy, Venegas, had become thoroughly alarmed and was gathering together the royal troops and taking measures to strengthen the fortifications of the capital. A price of ten thousand pesos was set upon the head of Hidalgo, and also upon that of his captains Allende and Aldama, while the Inquisition for its part excommunicated these three and all of the other insurgent leaders.

At El Monte de las Cruces on October 30th, Hidalgo's revolutionists met the royal troops sent against them by the Viceroy. A furious battle took place.



Allende and the regiment under his immediate command covered themselves with glory, and the overwhelming victory for the revolutionists was due wholly to the military genius and leadership of this captain. The Spaniards fled in disorder back to their fortified city.

Had Hidalgo seized this moment when his troops, fresh from victory, were filled with self-confidence and a wild enthusiasm for the cause, he undoubtedly could have taken Mexico City and so have ended, almost as soon as it began, this War of Independence which dragged along for eleven years. But Hidalgo was a curate, not a soldier; his was to plan the campaign of souls, not the strategic movements of untrained troops. Captain Allende would have been a far more capable military leader; but Allende could not hold the men as could their well-loved curate. Hidalgo could lead them anywhere.

But now the curate made a great strategic error. Instead of marching boldly upon Mexico, his Virgin of Guadalupe banner flying, he halted his army about fifteen miles away and sent in a demand for the surrender of the city. Then, learning that a large royalist force was in his rear, and fearing to be sandwiched between them and the Viceroy's troops in Mexico, he gave the order to fall back.

Nothing could so have demoralized his men. Eager



to rush forward, confident of victory, this order to retreat awakened in the revolutionists for the first time a lack of confidence in their leader. When a few days later they met the royalist army and a sharp battle took place, the insurgents, fighting with little enthusiasm, were completely routed. Hidalgo with a mere remnant of his men escaped to Guadalajara and attempted to set up a government there; but the rebel army, utterly discouraged, and half-starving, had melted away. There was no money to buy food; and a hungry army cannot fight. The spirit of independence was by no means crushed in them; it only lay dormant, succumbing to the pangs of bodily hunger.

The royalists, marching toward Guadalajara, stopped at Guanajuato long enough to take frightful revenge for the massacre of the garrison in the Alhóndiga. Men, women, and children were butchered without mercy, several thousand of the inhabitants being slaughtered in cold blood before the Spanish troops tired of their sport and left the distressed city.

With his army gone and the royalists closing in upon Guadalajara, Hidalgo fled to the north with a few of his officers; but these pioneers of Mexico's independence were betrayed, captured, and promptly executed. The heads of Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama, and Jiminez were then suspended in iron cages from the four corners of the Alhóndiga de Granaditas; and, incredible as it may seem, there they remained

for eleven years before reverent hands took them down and buried them beneath the Altar de los Reyes in the Cathedral of Mexico City.

With the execution of these leaders, peace reigned in the heart of the Viceroy. But not for long. José María Morelos, a curate in a small town of Michoacan, and a former pupil and friend of Hidalgo, promptly took up the leadership of the revolutionists. He was as violently patriotic as had been the curate of Dolores; like Hidalgo, he was a leader of men; and, in addition, he was a military genius. Under his leadership the insurgents regained their enthusiasm. The spirit of freedom swept like wildfire over the country.

A story of Guadalupe Victoria, who later became the first president of Mexico, shows the daring and determined spirit of the patriots. Troops under Morelos were closely pursued by a much larger body of royalists, and they hastily fell back upon a village which lay beyond the Atoyac River and so in a way was protected, for the river at that season was full and swift. To their dismay they found that the bridge spanning the water had been drawn up by the villagers on the other side to prevent them from crossing. There were no boats to be seen; the river was too deep to ford; and the enemy was at their heels. Grabbing an ax, Guadalupe Victoria swam the stream, while the panic-stricken villagers looked on, cut the ropes

which held the bridge, and enabled the revolutionists to dash across just as the enemy came up.

In spite of unceasing efforts on the part of the Viceroy to stamp out every vestige of revolution, affairs were going so well with the patriots that toward the end of 1813 a national congress was called by Morelos to discuss the terms of a constitution. It met at Chilpancingo, and on November 6th the declaration of independence was drawn up. The following day Morelos set out to take Valladolid, and his defeat there was the beginning of a long series of disasters for the patriots. The greatest of these was the capture of Morelos himself in 1815. He was leading the members of his congress over the mountains to the security of the city of Tehuacán, which was wholly revolutionary, when suddenly they were set upon by the royalists. Morelos and a few of his patriots heroically held the enemy back until most of the men had escaped through a narrow pass. One by one, the patriots followed until only one man was left beside Morelos. But now the enemy had closed in, and the great leader was captured. He was taken to Mexico City, tortured by the Inquisition in the last *auto da fé* ever pronounced in Mexico, and shot on the edge of an open grave which already had been prepared for him.

With the execution of Morelos, the cause again seemed lost, and during the next four or five years

only spurts of rebellion occurred. Guadalupe Victoria, hunted especially by the royalists, had to flee to the mountains, where for two years he remained hidden in a deep barranca overgrown with tropical vegetation, living the life of a hermit, eating such food as nature provided in his small world—nuts, berries and wild bananas—not daring to venture out of the thick foliage of his ravine. Even the Indians did not go near him for fear of disclosing his hiding-place.

But the first great patriots, Hidalgo, Allende, Morelos, and the many others, had not given their lives in vain. In the hearts of Creoles, Mestizos and natives alike there now was a yearning for freedom that could not be suppressed.

In 1820 General Agustín de Iturbide was placed in command of the royalist forces. This sudden promotion from an obscure position proved a fatal mistake for the royalists; for Iturbide immediately became intoxicated with power and forgot loyalty to his king and all else in his scheming for fame and wealth for himself. His ambitions went beyond the viceroyalty; they soared to an independent Mexico of which he, the great Iturbide, would be emperor.

Among Morelos' revolutionary leaders one had remained continuously active, and somehow had avoided capture. That was Vincente Guerrero, who never wavered in his zealous efforts for the cause of free-

dom. Iturbide, setting out grandiosely at the head of his royalist troops, made a feint at marching against the insurgent leader; but secretly he sent a message to Guerrero, and when they met at Iguala, Iturbide joined forces with the revolutionists, and together the two generals, Iturbide and Guerrero, issued the "Plan of Iguala." This proclaimed the independence of Mexico, advocated the establishment of a limited monarchy, the maintenance of the Roman Catholic religion, and equal rights for Spaniards and Mexicans.

The Viceroy, Apodaca, immediately pronounced Iturbide a traitor and an outlaw, and sent troops to arrest him. But Spain's grip at last had loosened, the colony was fast slipping from her hand. Province after province joined the revolutionists; and when Apodaca was deposed as viceroy and General Juan O'Donojú arrived in Vera Cruz to supersede him, the new viceroy saw the uselessness of further attempts to suppress the rebellion. It had grown too strong. O'Donojú met Iturbide in Córdoba and on August 24, 1821, signed the "Treaty of Córdoba" which recognized the absolute independence of Mexico. Spain promptly repudiated this treaty; but, although the last of her troops were not withdrawn from the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa, at Vera Cruz, until six years later, she nevertheless had lost forever her hold on Mexico.

O'Donojú was the last of the viceroys, and when he died soon after his arrival in the capital, Iturbide alone was left in the limelight there.

A provisional junta, with Iturbide as its president, governed until the first Mexican Congress could be convened, in February, 1822. The members were divided in their views as to the form of government that should be adopted for the independent country. Some wanted an outright republic, modeled on the United States, for they had been watching the extraordinary progress of their neighbor to the north since her own declaration of independence; some wanted a monarchy with Iturbide for their first king, the throne to be hereditary—one can suspect the rich plums they had been promised by the would-be emperor; still others were in favor of a monarchy with a Bourbon prince on the throne. So momentous a question was not to be settled without long and violent discussions. The Bourbonists dropped their plan because of Spain's attitude in not acknowledging their independence; so now it lay between but two parties, republicans and Iturbide monarchists. Iturbide in the meantime was working quietly but cunningly; and so, on May 18, 1822, the monarchy won—at a meeting at which the republicans were excluded by force—and Iturbide was elected Emperor of Mexico and was, on July 21, crowned *Augustín I* with elaborate ceremonies in the Cathedral of Mexico.



Three days of festivity and wild rejoicing followed; but this was merely a relaxation of pent-up emotions; by no means an approval of the arrogant and self-centered emperor. Almost at once a revolution was planned; Iturbide's election was to be declared unconstitutional and a republican government installed. This revolution was the beginning of almost constant warfare which broke out upon the least provocation and covered a period of sixty years, until Porfirio Díaz was elected for his second term of presidency in 1884.

Iturbide, forced to abdicate in less than a year after his coronation, was exiled, and on his return to the country the following year was promptly executed.

Following the abdication of the emperor, a triumvirate assumed control until October, 1824, when General Guadalupe Victoria, one of the leading spirits in the struggle for independence, became the first president of the Republic of Mexico.

It was a common custom for leaders to discard their own names and choose any that might be suited to the occasion. Guadalupe Victoria, while he was at the head of the revolutionary forces in Vera Cruz and matters were going none too well for the cause, had chosen the name Guadalupe in honor of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, and Victoria because there could be only victory under her banner. Thus as General Guadalupe Victoria his followers had for him a loyalty and en-

thusiasm they never could have had for this same man as Juan Felix Fernández.

The United States was prompt to recognize the new republic. England did so after the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine. The first representative of the United States, Joel Poinset, added in no small way to the political confusion already existing, for he actively supported the Yorkino party of Freemasonry which stood for democracy, in strong opposition to the Escoceses party with its monarchical tendencies. Even the Yorkinos themselves were divided, and during a conflict between them several stores were pillaged, including a French pastry-shop. This incident, ten years later, gave the name to the short-lived "Pastry War" with France.



## VIII. THE IRREPRESSIBLE SANTA ANA

THE TAKING OF TAMPICO  
THE TREACHERY OF BUSTAMENTE  
THE EXECUTION OF GUERRERO  
UPS AND DOWNS OF SANTA ANA  
THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS  
THE "PASTRY WAR" WITH FRANCE  
WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES  
THE TAKING OF NEW MEXICO  
CALIFORNIA'S LAST STAND  
THE SIEGE OF MONTERREY  
THE ATTACK ON VERA CRUZ  
OUSTING SANTA ANA  
THE FALL OF MEXICO CITY  
THE BATTLE OF THE WOUNDED  
THE TREATY OF PEACE  
THE "DICTATOR FOR LIFE"



## VIII

### THE IRREPRESSIBLE SANTA ANA

**N**O longer did the gold of Mexico pour into Spain, and the King's exchequer was sadly in need of replenishing. In 1827 the last of the Spanish troops had been withdrawn, under compulsion, but not yet was Spain willing to acknowledge Mexican independence. On the contrary, she was secretly planning a sudden coup that would regain the lost colony which for three centuries had been pouring its riches into her lap.

Vincente Guerrero, the revolutionary hero, was the second president, and during his brief eight months in office Spain suddenly descended upon Mexico. Four thousand well-armed troops landed at Tampico and took possession of the town. This called for quick action on the part of Guerrero, and he dispatched his ablest military leader, Antonio López de Santa Ana, to make short shrift of the invaders.

Santa Ana, who was destined to become one of the most notorious and most hated men in Mexican history, had begun his military career at the age of fifteen and had risen in prominence until he had attained the generalship of a division. With two thousand picked



men, now, he sailed from Vera Cruz for Tampico. But scarcely had he left Vera Cruz unprotected when word reached Guerrero that more Spanish troops were arriving. Something must be done quickly. Guerrero hastily dispatched Anastasio Bustamente, as the best man at hand, with a large force to guard the coast. Santa Ana gained a complete victory at Tampico, and the invaders took to their ships and sailed back to Spain, giving up all hopes of regaining Mexico.

But trouble was brewing at Vera Cruz, for Bustamente found power too sweet to relinquish. Never before had he been at the head of a large army; and now Santa Ana was returning to relieve him. That would never do. He would make use of his army while he had it. Setting out at once with all his troops, he marched upon Mexico, entered the capital grandiosely, declared Guerrero's election unconstitutional, and proclaimed himself president.

Guerrero, taken unawares, had to flee from the city and seek refuge in the mountains of the south. But in addition to being rightfully president of the republic, Guerrero was a beloved hero of the War of Independence, and the entire south was ready to take up arms to replace him. Bustamente saw his office tottering. One thing alone could stay the overwhelming revolution that threatened, and that was the death of Guerrero; and nothing but treachery could effect the capture of a man whom thousands would lay down

their lives to protect. Bustamente bribed the captain of a small boat to sail to Acapulco, gain the friendship of Guerrero, invite him aboard for dinner, and then quickly weigh anchor. For fifty thousand pesos the captain agreed, and in due time delivered his prisoner; and Guerrero was taken to Oaxaca and executed in a nearby pueblo.

Even Europe was aghast at this treachery.

Santa Ana, the fiery leader, ever eager for battle, set out post-haste from Vera Cruz to oust the usurper. And so again the revolution was on. Bustamente was deposed, and Santa Ana became president. At first, preferring to rule through a dummy, he retired to his hacienda and left Gómez Farias ostensibly at the head of the government. New political parties now arose; new disturbances broke out; innumerable *pronunciamientos* were issued. Farias eventually was divested of his power; Santa Ana became president in reality; then dictator. Now in absolute control, ambition overwhelmed him. The welfare of the land was as nothing to glory and despotic power for himself. But his abuse of office caused enemies to spring up on all sides; and in 1835 Santa Ana, before he could be deposed, cleverly relinquished the presidency and retired to his hacienda. There he immediately began to recruit an army, so that he might march against the capital and again seize the supreme control.

And while affairs were in this turbulent condition in

the capital, in one of Mexico's territories to the north new trouble was brewing. Moses Austin, from Missouri, had settled in Texas on the river Brazos, and, representing himself to the Mexicans as a good Catholic persecuted by Protestants, he had been granted rights there. At the death of this pioneer, his son, Stephen F. Austin, took up the colonizing of the district, bringing in his American friends and their families; until gradually there grew up a strong and influential American colony, the Mexicans easily giving over the control of local affairs to these more energetic, more enterprising, neighbors from the north.

At last, when Santa Ana again had overthrown the government in the capital and established a dictatorship in Mexico, this vast territory, which had been considered a part of Coahuila, proclaimed its complete independence as the Republic of Texas.

There was in Mexico at this time no more efficient military leader than Santa Ana. So by popular acclaim he was chosen to subdue the *yanqui insurrectos* and bring Texas back into the fold.

Santa Ana might have been a military genius had he ever been able to submerge his love of personal glory in the greater issues of military stratagem. But with him it was always Santa Ana first. With all his overwhelming ambitions, however, his ruthless cruelty, his untold atrocities, he was an absolutely fearless leader and, what Mexican troops most needed, an iron-

handed disciplinarian. With six thousand troops he crossed into Texas early in 1836, and his entry was like a triumphal procession, for town after town fell into his hands with little or no resistance. "These triumphs," says a Mexican historian, "intoxicated the commander-in-chief. He would not accept the complete capitulation of a town; instead he killed, pillaged, burned, and committed a thousand atrocities against the Texan *insurrectos*."

Now marching boldly upon the Alamo, he captured that stronghold on March 6, 1836, and deliberately murdered the entire garrison. This barbarity was repeated a few days later at Goliad, when a force of nearly four hundred Texans were captured and massacred. Santa Ana's name became a thing of dread throughout the land. The Texans, led by General Sam Houston, a Virginian, marched against him and by a clever ruse surprised and captured the Mexican leader and his entire army on April 21. Finding himself and his men in prison, and fearful lest the Texans take revenge for his many atrocities, especially the Alamo and Goliad, Santa Ana unreservedly acknowledged the complete independence of Texas. He was then permitted to return to Mexico; but once safe across the Rio Grande he repudiated his words, declaring that they had been given under duress and that Texas was still a part of Coahuila.

In September, 1836, Sam Houston was elected presi-

dent of the Republic of Texas; and the United States, Great Britain, France and Belgium were prompt to recognize the new republic. But even at this time the Texans were considering annexation to the United States. Being themselves Americans, largely from the Southern States, they saw many advantages to be gained by annexation; and in 1844 they formally asked to be taken into the Union. Long and heated discussions arose over the slavery question; but eventually the new republic was annexed and became the State of Texas on March 1, 1845.

The Mexican Congress, in the meantime, thoroughly dissatisfied with conditions, had in 1836 framed a new constitution, consisting of seven laws and therefore popularly known as the *Siete Leyes*. Bustamente again became president, for Santa Ana was in disgrace because of his failure in Texas.

In 1838 came the brief "Pastry War." France's claims for the pillaging of her shops ten years previously never having been satisfied, she now sent a fleet to blockade the coast of Vera Cruz. The fortress of San Juan de Ulúa was bombarded and the town of Vera Cruz occupied. The Government at Mexico, in the throes of internal conflict, with Santa Ana hammering at its door, with uprisings and secessions, with a serious foreign war already threatening, could but give in to the French and hastily settle all claims. The

French fleet was then withdrawn, and the "Pastry War" came to a quiet end.

Disgrace meant nothing to Santa Ana. In disfavor he might be, but the supreme power should be his. By much intriguing and a little force, he accomplished this in 1841. Bustamente was driven from the country, and Santa Ana again became president of the strife-torn republic.

And now a respite occurred while a great celebration took place. It was the three-hundredth anniversary of the miraculous appearance of the *Virgen de los Remedios*, and all of Mexico gave itself over to joyous fiesta. Our Lady of Remedies is the rival of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*; and during the War of Independence when the Guadalupe Virgin became the patron saint of the Mexicans, *Nuestra Señora de los Remedios* was acclaimed by the Spaniards not only as their patroness but as Generalissimo of the Royal Army and the little wooden image of the Virgin was dressed in the uniform of a Spanish general. The image resembles a very crudely carved wooden doll, about ten inches high, holding in its arms an Infant Jesus, also crude in the extreme. At one time, when matters were going none too well with the Spaniards, they went to the little image and told her that if she would answer their prayers they would permit her to occupy her exalted place in the cathedral and wear her jeweled petticoats; but if she remained deaf to their



entreaties they would put her in plain clothes and ship her back to Spain. Apparently the image did not like to be threatened; for she paid no attention to their appeal. So the Spaniards took down the little wooden doll, wrapped her in a plain piece of cotton, actually bought a passport for her, and started her on her trip to Spain, when some one interfered and had the disgraced image returned to her place in the church.

The finding of this image of the *Virgen de los Remedios*, and its accompanying "miracles," occurred during the days of the good Bishop Zumárraga, ten years after the famous Miracle of Guadalupe. The story is that in 1520 when Cortés and his men were fleeing from Tenochtitlán after *La Noche Triste*, one of his captains, Villafuerte, carried with him this small image of the Virgin. The Spaniards, finding themselves unpursued, stopped to rest on the hilltop of Totoltepec—where the *Santuario de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios* now stands—and Villafuerte, snatching a moment's sleep in the shade of a great maguey-plant, was hastily awakened by Cortés, and rushed off, leaving his sacred image lying beneath the maguey. There it remained for more than twenty years. Then the Virgin decided it high time to bring it out of its obscurity, and she had a rabbit—which in the Indian mind is closely associated with the maguey—disclose its hiding-place.

And so it happened that when in 1541 an Indian was

crossing the hill of Totoltepec he was suddenly startled by a huge rabbit which sprang up from under his feet, coming from nowhere, for there was neither a bush nor a tuft of grass nor a crevice in the ground anywhere near him. But not knowing it was a miraculous rabbit, he gave chase. It darted beneath a giant maguey and disappeared; but the Indian forgot the rabbit, for there before his eyes lay the image of the Virgin and the Infant Jesus. Cequauhtzin, having been baptized as Juan de Aguila, was a good Catholic, so he took the image home reverently and stood it upon an improvised altar in his hut. In the morning the image had disappeared. Juan went straightway to the maguey on top of the hill; and there it lay where he first had found it. Again he carried the treasure home and set it upon its altar; and that night, fearing that the image might be hungry and leave in search of food, he placed a maize-cake and a gourd of water beside it. The next morning the cake had been eaten, the water had been drunk, and the image had vanished. Once more Juan found it under the maguey; and this time he took no chances with it. He placed it in a strong wooden chest, locked the chest securely, and then, to be extra sure, slept on top of it. In the morning Juan's bed had not been disturbed, and the chest was still locked, but the image miraculously had been transported to the hilltop, and there it lay, its round eyes staring up at the maguey.

Juan now hastened to the nearest mission and told his story to the monks; and they of course understood at once that the Virgin was performing miracles so that a shrine would be built for her upon the spot where the maguey-plant grew. A chapel was erected there immediately, word of the great miracle was spread abroad, and the ugly little wooden image was dressed in a silk robe embroidered with pearls of great value, false hair was glued on its head, and a rich gold-and-jeweled crown added. Many miracles were now credited to the Virgin of the Maguey, but especially was she noted for the miraculous healing of the sick and the supply of a plenteous rainfall whenever appealed to with the proper ceremonial rites. A silver altar enclosed her shrine, and beside her was placed a huge maguey, made entirely of pure silver. These and many of her richest jewels were sensibly used by the government, to the horror of the Church, during the establishment of the Reform Laws. But the wooden doll still remains, now clothed in a pearl-embroidered silk robe and covered with a cape of pure gold, her tiny fingers, her neck, and her crown resplendent with jewels. Next to the "miraculously" painted picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, this crude wooden image is the most venerated thing in Mexico. The *Santuario de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios*, which now is an elaborate church and marks the site of the original maguey-plant, is on a hilltop just outside the village of

San Bartolo Naucalpan, a few miles from Mexico City.

Every year, in September, a pilgrimage is made from all parts of the country and a great celebration takes place in honor of the miracle-working Virgin. So when, in 1841, the three-hundredth anniversary arrived, even the great Santa Ana was forgotten while the Mexicans gave themselves over to a fiesta of commingled superstition, religion, and joyous abandon.

At this time there were two strong political factions in Mexico. The *Federals*, or *Liberals*, stood for democracy, the rights of the people; while the *Centralists* believed in the express privileges of the Clergy and the Army, their tendency being decidedly monarchical.

Santa Ana, a violent monarchist, after driving out Bustamente and securing the presidency, found his power restricted by a strong Federal Congress; so he cleverly left the governmental affairs in the hands of General Bravo, who also was a vehement monarchist. As soon as Bravo had succeeded in weeding out the Federals and establishing a new Centralist constitution, then Santa Ana himself returned to the presidency, in 1844.

But those were days of continuous upheaval in Mexico. In less than six months Santa Ana was deposed, imprisoned, and exiled—and a year later he was begged to return, begged to accept the presidency and become commander-in-chief of the army.

For war then was in progress with the United States.

From the moment Texas declared her independence as a separate republic there had been disputes about the boundary line between Texas and Coahuila. The Mexicans claimed that this most indefinite line always had been at the Rio Nueces, while Texans insisted it was the Rio Grande. The territory in dispute was too valuable to be given up amicably by either side. The Mexicans, claiming it, were constantly crossing the Rio Grande and harassing the settlements in an effort to drive the Texans beyond the Rio Nueces. The new republic was too weak to do much alone, but when in 1845 it became part of the United States it appealed to the Union for protection; and in January, 1846, President Polk ordered the American forces, under General Zachary Taylor, to proceed to the Rio Grande. A fort was erected near the mouth of the river where it commanded the Mexican port of Matamoros. The Mexican forces, hoping they could isolate the new fort, crossed the Rio Grande into the territory claimed by both themselves and the Texans, and at Palo Alto on May 8 they met the Americans under General Taylor and after five hours of severe fighting were defeated and driven back. Again on the following day, at Resaca de la Palma, they were defeated.

News of these two battles aroused the wildest enthusiasm in both countries. The war spirit was aflame. In Mexico party factions were forgotten. It was now

one nation, united, determined to drive out this *yanqui* army which not merely was at their door but actually across the threshold, for was not the contested territory theirs? In the United States one fact stood uppermost. The blood of American soldiers had been shed upon American soil! Congress voted ten million dollars; and an army of fifty thousand troops was raised and placed under the command of General Winfield Scott. This army was organized in three divisions: one, under General Kearney, was to invade New Mexico and California; another, under Zachary Taylor, was to hold the territory beyond the Rio Nueces and if necessary cross the Rio Grande; and the third, under General Scott, was to take Vera Cruz and march inland to Mexico City, the capital of the republic.

General Kearney met with little resistance in New Mexico, and after capturing and garrisoning Santa Fé, he began a dreary march across endless deserts to California. Kit Carson intercepted him with the good news that California already was in the hands of Americans, having been wrested from the Mexicans by the great explorer John Frémont, aided by the Pacific Squadron. Kearney, on learning this, sent back to Santa Fé all but a hundred of his dragoons, and with those he continued on to the Pacific coast and joined forces with Frémont and Commodore Stockton. Early in 1847 the Mexicans made an effort to regain the lost territory, and on January 8 the decisive battle was



fought at San Gabriel, and California passed, with little further resistance, into the hands of the Americans.

In the meantime General Taylor, crossing the Rio Grande, captured Matamoros and then marched upon the old town of Monterrey, where the Mexicans had fallen back and fortified themselves. On the 19th of September the siege of Monterrey began, and two days later the Americans made an assault upon the fortifications. The town was valiantly defended by the Mexican troops. They fought heroically. But one by one their strongholds were taken until only the old Bishop's Palace on top of the hill remained. This had been a pretentious castle when it was built in 1785; but the bishop lived there only five years and then the place was abandoned, to be used later as a barracks. Its tumbling ruins are of interest today because of their historic association and because of the superb view which may be had from them out across the rolling hills of Nuevo León to the blue-black mountains that cut against the sky. At the foot of the hill a gay little river winds through the city of Monterrey and wanders off among the foothills, losing itself between two rugged mountains and eventually reaching the Rio Grande.

When the Americans assaulted the Bishop's Palace in 1846 it was a formidable stronghold because of its position on top of the steep hill. Again and again

the Americans had to fall back, but eventually the place was taken, and the following day the city surrendered. It was a proud capitulation, however, and its heroic defenders were accorded all the honors of war.

An armistice of eight weeks was now granted, at the request of the Mexicans, so that negotiations for peace might be made. But at the city of Mexico agreement on the peace terms could not be reached, and the exiled Santa Ana was sent for in all haste, during the armistice lull, brought back from Havana and placed at the head of the government and the army.

At the end of the eight weeks, no terms having been submitted, the Americans again assumed the offensive. Saltillo was captured; and Tampico was taken by the American navy. Up in New Mexico the garrison at Santa Fé was having a monotonous time, and at last Colonel Doniphan could stand inaction no longer, for he was eager to be in the midst of the fighting. With seven hundred men he set out on a march of nearly a thousand miles to join the forces at Saltillo. Several skirmishes occurred on the way, the most important being a battle on the banks of the Sacramento, where the Mexicans were defeated, and following upon that the city of Chihuahua was taken.

On February 22, 1847, the newly organized Mexican army under Santa Ana advanced against General Taylor, entrenched at Buena Vista. A large part of Taylor's army had been withdrawn by General Scott

to reinforce his troops in the contemplated march from Vera Cruz to Mexico City; thus Taylor had now less than five thousand men, to meet Santa Ana's army of nearly fifteen thousand. But the forces were not so unevenly matched; for the Americans were well-trained, well-equipped, and, most important, well-fed, while the Mexicans were none of these. The battle began at dawn on the 23rd and raged all day with a tremendous loss of life on both sides. At dusk Santa Ana retreated to Agua Nueva, and Taylor to Saltillo, neither side being able to claim a victory. Lack of food, more than all else, now forced Santa Ana to suspend operations. The Mexican soldiers were staunchly patriotic, and were fighting with a fierce determination to drive the enemy out of their country; but, ill-fed, they were no match for a well-nourished army, fighting with the typical American determination to get whatever it sets out for.

General Scott had begun his attack on Vera Cruz on February 22, combining a land and naval bombardment of the fortress of Ulúa and then turning the guns upon the city. For five days a rain of projectiles fell upon Vera Cruz, destroying about two-thirds of the city. The garrison made a heroic resistance, but on the 27th it was compelled to surrender, and two days later was permitted to march out with all the honors of war.

Learning of this capitulation, Santa Ana imme-



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### SAN JUAN DE ULÚA

The centuries-old fortress that stands guard over Vera Cruz  
is steeped in tragic history.



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### IN THE HILLS OF VERA CRUZ

Protected from the jungle, the little village of Atoyac stands quaintly on an old Spanish causeway.

diately set out for the coast, at the head of a new army of about nine thousand men. In the rocky cliffs of Cerro Gordo, near Jalapa, he entrenched to await the Americans who even now, about eight thousand strong, were on the march up from Vera Cruz toward the capital. Cerro Gordo was one of Santa Ana's military blunders. General Scott had little difficulty in driving him from the cliffs and forcing him to retreat to Orizaba; and from there he fell back to Puebla, where he had time to reprovision his army and leave the city before the Americans entered on May 15.

After the dreaded Santa Ana had been in the town, mercilessly pillaging, under the cloak of reprovisioning, the city of Puebla received the Americans open-armed. Churchbells were rung, a day of fiesta proclaimed, and General Scott and his officers sumptuously banqueted. This welcome was not for Americans; it was for the men who were endeavoring to capture the terrible Santa Ana.

That redoubtable warrior had retreated to Mexico and was hastily strengthening the fortifications of the city and recruiting new troops for its defense. General Scott remained in Puebla many weeks, waiting for needed reinforcements from the coast. When these arrived early in August the American army set out for the capital, over practically the same road that three and a quarter centuries previously Hernando Cortés had used in his march upon the Aztec strong-



hold. To the south of them rose the snow-crowned peaks of Popocatépetl and Ixtaccíhuatl; at their feet lay flower-sprinkled meadows checkered here and there with patches of maize and giving way to rolling hills covered with maguey. Climbing ever upward, the army passed through forests of fragrant pine, and came out upon the lakes and marshy lagoons of the plateau.

Overtures of peace were made by General Scott; but they included the ceding to the United States of Upper California, New Mexico, and the disputed territory in Texas. This the Mexicans refused to consider for a moment.

They fought heroically, those untrained, ill-equipped, half-starved patriots; but they were outmatched. Churubusco was taken by the Americans; Molino del Rey; and at last the Castle of Chapultepec was assaulted and, with great difficulty, taken. On September 14, 1847, General Scott's army entered the city of Mexico and raised the American flag over the National Palace, Santa Ana having retired to Guadalupe Hidalgo, where he renounced the presidency and, finding himself in general disfavor, set forth for Oaxaca, to see what trouble might be stirred up there. On the way he committed the most atrocious of all the many atrocities that blacken his entire career.

When Scott had received his reinforcements and set out for the capital in August he had left behind

him in the still-friendly city of Puebla all of his sick and wounded, numbering about eighteen hundred, and with them a force of five hundred men, under Colonel Childs, to take care of them. Colonel Childs was not the man to be caught unawares. Preparing for any emergency, he secured thirty cattle and four hundred sheep besides large quantities of army provisions, and barricaded himself and his charges in the public plaza. Breastworks of stone and bales of cotton were thrown up on all sides. And these precautions were taken none too soon. For news of the hospital camp reached Santa Ana. Eighteen hundred sick and wounded men, with their handful of guards, would be easy prey, he decided, and a quick victory and wholesale massacre would bring new heart into his straggling troops. With about twenty-five hundred desperadoes, he swept down upon Puebla. The inhabitants of the city lived in constant dread of Santa Ana; and now that he was upon them they did not dare show friendship for the Americans. Lest he suspect them, they even sided openly with the powerful and ruthless Mexican leader, denouncing loudly the ill-defended, sick and wounded *yanquis*.

The Americans, besieged in their barricaded square, well knew that if they fell into the hands of Santa Ana they would be slaughtered in cold blood; so, however hard pressed they might be, there could be no surren-

der. Better for the last man to die fighting than to be mercilessly butchered.

Santa Ana decided that a massacre would be more heartening to his troops than a battle; so, sure of his prey, he sent in a demand for the surrender of the camp. To his surprise, this was refused. At once he opened artillery fire upon the plaza. Simultaneously a deadly musketry fire fell upon the square from the surrounding housetops; while massed infantry poured through the streets and rushed the barricades with machetes and bayonets.

Day after terrible day, week after heartrending week, this kept up. Against all the overwhelming, discouraging odds, Colonel Childs and his handful of men held the plaza. The sick who could yet manage to crawl about did guard duty, prepared the food, and cared for the utterly helpless, thus freeing the able-bodied to protect the barricades; the wounded who could hold a musket propped themselves against the breastworks and aided their comrades in keeping back the army of onrushing bayonets. Under almost constant artillery and musketry fire, with their mortally wounded dying and no one, almost no place, to bury them, with the heat intense, with day following discouraging day, it is one of the wonders of history how this courageous little bunch of men could have held out for more than four weeks. Then suddenly, when they were almost too weary to realize it, the bombarding

ceased and the enemy scattered. Santa Ana had learned that General Lane was approaching from Vera Cruz with a large body of reinforcements for the harassed little hospital camp, and he hastily withdrew while there was yet time.

His army of ruffians having now quite deserted him, this infamous Mexican leader continued to Oaxaca, to see what glory might not be forthcoming there. But Benito Juárez was governor of Oaxaca, and he would have none of the mischief-maker; he peremptorily ordered him from the state. So Santa Ana again shook the dust of Mexico from his heels and crossed over into Guatemala, to try his fortunes there.

Peace negotiations between Mexico and the United States were going forward, and on February 2, 1848, the "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo" was concluded. This ceded to the United States all of Upper California, New Mexico, and Texas with the frontier at the Rio Grande. The United States for its part paid Mexico fifteen million dollars for the territory ceded, it assumed the liability of all American damage claims, amounting to an additional three and a half million dollars, and it agreed to withdraw its troops promptly. The treaty was ratified by Mexico early in May, and the American troops were then withdrawn.

But not yet was war-torn Mexico to know peace. For now internal troubles began anew. Herrera, as president, made conscientious but futile efforts to re-

store order and procure a stable government. General Paredes, wanting the presidency himself, fomented a revolution in Guanajuato. No sooner was that suppressed than the Indians of Sierra de Xichú rose in rebellion. And even before they were subdued, "Viva Santa Ana!" broke out in Sierra Gorda.

Yucatan had seceded and declared her independence. Scarcely was she thus isolated when a terrible civil war began, and the Indians seized the opportunity for general uprising, adding to the horrors of the small colony. In these straits Yucatan was eager to annex herself to any country that would come quickly to her aid, England, Spain, or the United States. Mexico stepped in, and once more Yucatan became a state of the republic.

In 1851 a truly noteworthy event occurred in Mexico. It was the peaceful and constitutional election of a president—for the first time in the history of the republic. That should have meant a satisfied nation. But far from it. Arista, the new president, was like a weather-vane, ever siding with the stronger party; but his Congress was definitely Liberal, and this suited the Conservatives not at all. Backed by the Church, they at once began to foment a revolution. The first conflicts were in Guerrero, but the real storm broke in Guadalajara in 1852 and rapidly spread. Discouraged, Arista resigned; and the government entered upon one of its blackest periods, three men holding

the reins successively in the next three months, while the country was in the throes of continuous revolution and the nation was rapidly sliding backward. In the midst of this, their old stand-by, Santa Ana, was recalled from his second exile and promptly made Dictator.

So pleased was he with this exalted position after his many misfortunes that he issued a *pronunciamiento* making himself Dictator for Life and requiring that he be addressed as "Most Serene Highness." Any one guilty of criticising him or his government was to be severely tortured. He restored the Order of Guadalupe, created by Iturbide, and made himself its Grand Master. He sold to the United States for ten million dollars the territory now known as Arizona, and at once squandered all the money. "To narrate," says a Mexican, "one by one the gross blunders of this man, would be a long and arduous task."

But one thing worth while was accomplished during the dictatorship of Santa Ana. He was in no way responsible for it except that he merely did not veto it. That was the establishment of a *Departamento de Fomento*, planned by Lucas Alamán. This was to encourage public works, and to further education and general intellectual and economic development. Even today this department is an important factor in the welfare of the republic

The "Dictator for Life," becoming more and more



arrogant, more and more tyrannical, soon reached such a pinnacle in his own estimation that he believed himself almost a god. But all the time he was pulling the noose about his neck, and the country was rising against him. On March 1, 1854, a few military leaders got together in Guerrero and proclaimed the "Plan of Ayutla." Under its terms Santa Ana was to be deposed and a provisional government established to secure a new constitution. This of course meant revolution, for not peaceably would the Dictator relinquish his power. But now the noose had descended; the entire country rose in revolt against him; and in August, 1855, Santa Ana for the third time fled from the country, seeking the safety of Havana. At last his star had set. Mexico was to see him again, to be sure, but never again was he to have either power or prominence in the affairs of his native land.

## IX. WHEN MIGHT WAS RIGHT

BENITO JUÁREZ  
THE WAR OF REFORM  
THE REVENGE OF THE CHURCH  
THE "MARTYRS OF TACUBAYA"  
AMERICAN AID  
AN ERA OF ANARCHY  
FOREIGN INTERVENTION  
WAR WITH FRANCE  
THE GLORIOUS "CINCO DE MAYO"  
WHEN MAXIMILIAN CAME  
THE SCHEMES OF CARLOTA  
BACKING THE MONROE DOCTRINE  
THE REPUBLIC AGAIN  
"THE BENEFIT OF THE CLERGY"  
THE STRIKE FOR FREEDOM  
THE RISE OF PORFIRIO DÍAZ

hills are stark and bare except for giant cacti and a few low, sand-loving creepers. Many of the mountains are clothed from foot to top with dense forests, showing here and there patches of lighter green where cliffs are covered with tumbling vines. Tropical vegetation clings to the foot of the mountains and runs riotously off over the rich valleys, giving way, where man has stepped in, to tobacco fields, plantations of henequén or the altogether lovely castor-plant. The valleys are crisscrossed with roads which swoop down from the hills and wander on between tall fences of organ-cacti planted so close together that even the rabbits scampering across the sands have difficulty in squeezing through. When these cactus-fences are in bloom, brick-red against sage-green, and are seen under the yellow-gold of a Oaxaca sun or the silver magic of its moon, one understands why the ancient Zapotecs named this region the Habitation of Heroes and the Garden of the Gods.

But all the bright beauty of the valleys and the rugged loveliness of the mountains, all its interesting ruins of prehistoric races, all its wealth in mines and fields, mean little to the Mexicans in comparison with Oaxaca's greatest glory, as the birthplace of Benito Pablo Juárez.

Juárez was a pure-blooded Zapotec Indian, born in a peon's hut in a little mountain village in 1806. His babyhood taste of freedom was to color all the years

of his greatness. As a tiny child he roamed the Oaxaca mountains, wading its cool streams, digging his bare toes into its warm sands, chasing the abundant rabbits, and gathering the bright-blossomed flowers, for even the children of Mexico's southland have a great love of beauty in color. As he grew older, Juárez wandered farther afield, and came one day to the city of Oaxaca. But this small boy was unwilling to lie about in the sun, as did his playmates; he sought work, and the work he found proved the turning-point in his career. It was with a book-binding, and the handling of books gave the youngster a thirst for knowledge. A kindly priest taught him to read and write, and later helped him through school. Juárez then studied for the priesthood, but he found it not at all to his liking and gave it up for law. From one public position to another he rose, filling each most worthily during the troublous times in which he lived. From the governorship of Oaxaca, he went to Mexico City, to become Minister of Justice in the president's cabinet. Having risen from the peon class, Juárez was a stanch Liberal, and he worked unceasingly for the welfare of the people. Reforms which he inaugurated and enforced were the most beneficial ever instituted in Mexican history. But at every step he was vehemently opposed by the Clergy.

In 1855 while Minister of Justice he issued the so-called *Ley Juárez*, which restricted the special privi-

leges of the Army and the Clergy and brought military and ecclesiastical tribunals within the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts of justice.

The Clergy, during the upheaval following Santa Ana, had become very powerful in Mexican affairs, and they took the Juárez Law to be a direct insult to them and an effort to curb their influence. Such Liberalism would be their undoing. They had watched with alarm the growing popularity of this Indian from Oaxaca; and now they felt it high time to act. In Puebla, the stronghold of the Clerical Party, the revolution was planned, and the Clergy found a willing leader in one of Santa Ana's villains, General Haro, who cared nothing for politics one way or another, but coveted the president's chair.

Comonfort assumed the presidency on December 11, 1855, and immediately began to carry forward the excellent work begun by his predecessor, President Alvarez, and Juárez; but in less than a week the fighting began, and continued for nearly six months.

Comonfort finally suppressed the revolution, and his first act then was to seize the immensely wealthy estates of the clergy at Puebla, to pay for the costs of this needless war, including pensions for the widows and orphans, and at the same time to punish those responsible.

Returning to the capital, President Comonfort issued a decree suppressing the Jesuits, whose pernicious



THE CHARM OF OLD MEXICO

Even in the big city of Puebla there is always the picturesque.





*Courtesy, Consulado General de México in N. Y.*

#### CHAPULTEPEC CASTLE

The "White House" of Mexico, all but hidden by its beautiful park.

cious efforts to cripple the government were adding in no small way to the general upheaval of affairs; and following this, on June 25, came the famous *Decreto de Desamortización*, often called the Ley Lerdo because of its author, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada. This provided for the sale, at assessed value, of vast lands held by the Church and not required for places of worship. It was not seizure of the property, for the entire proceeds from the sale went to the Church; it was the urgently needed freeing for private ownership of land, thousands of acres, on which the Clergy had been reaping a harvest from extortionate rentals.

The Clerical Party rose in violent protest. This, they declared, was an infringement of the Holy Rights of the Church. The battle-cry again became "*Religión y fueros!*" But the insurrections that broke out were promptly quelled by Comonfort.

The bitterest enmity now existed between the Clergy and the Liberals. A conspiracy was formed in the Franciscan monastery in Mexico City. Discovery of this led to the suppression of the Franciscan Order and the cutting of a wide street, the Avenida de la Independencia, through the very heart of the monastery gardens. The old church still stands, and is a popular place of worship today, but the vast grounds once occupied by the monastery are now covered with commercial buildings, in the midst of the business district.

Their revolution having failed and their various insurrections having been promptly suppressed, the Clericals saw they were unable to accomplish much by force, so they now resorted to other tactics. The Church excommunicated all the Liberal leaders. To be excommunicated is an awful thing to a Catholic; it means untold horrors in the next world; but even this, the Bishops feared, might not be sufficient to frighten the Liberals, so they went to the further extent of declaring from their pulpits that a terrible curse, the curse of an angry God, would rest for all eternity, in the next world as well as this, on any one who dared to purchase Church lands. This "curse" frightened off many individual purchasers who were unwilling to jeopardize their souls, and the land was bought up in vast tracts by a very few, who later became enormously wealthy from its resale.

In 1857 a new constitution framed by Juárez and modeled largely on that of the United States was adopted. Could it have been adhered to, Mexico today would be one of the leading nations of the world. It was excellent in all of its provisions. But it was much too liberal for the Clericals. They would have none of this new constitution, for it was a measure to protect the rights of the very people whom the Church was fighting to hold in superstitious subservience. Their protest was so violent that President Comonfort, who was but halfheartedly Liberal anyway, turned

upon his own Liberal government and threw Juárez and other important ministers into prison. The Clericals were jubilant. Their strength was not so insignificant after all! They met at Tacubaya, framed a new constitution, and adopted it as the "Plan of Tacubaya," with Comonfort as Dictator.

But Comonfort, once in office for the despotic Clericals, or, as they called themselves, Conservatives, veered again toward the Liberals. He freed Juárez; and then was forced to flee, for the Conservatives turned upon him and put Zuloaga, a violent Clerical, into the presidency. But the Liberals declared that Juárez, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, had automatically succeeded Comonfort in the presidency. Thus there were two presidents, and two violently antagonistic administrations in Mexico, each claiming the other to be illegal.

Juárez found the Clergy too strong for him in Mexico City. He established his Liberal government in Guadalajara; and immediately six states declared for him, raised seven thousand troops, and vehemently denounced the Clerical pseudo-government in the capital. Another war was on. In Guadalajara a Clerical colonel seized Juárez and his cabinet and summarily ordered them shot for high treason. They were taken to the execution-room in the prison and lined against the wall. "The firing-squad raised their guns and took aim; and at this critical moment D. Guillermo Prieto

spoke to them in phrases so ardent, so energetic, so persuasive, that those peon soldiers, astonished and moved, threw their guns to their shoulders and, disobeying their commander, marched from the room."

Juárez, however, was forced to evacuate Guadalajara. He went to Colima, and later sailed from Manzanillo for the United States to present his cause, leaving an able general in command of his troops. The Liberals were twice defeated in the suburbs of Mexico City. The second time was at Tacubaya on April 11, 1859, when all of their officers, after surrendering, were deliberately murdered. Next, six surgeons, including a British subject, who had been dressing the wounds of Liberals as well as Clericals, were lined up and shot. These fifty-three prisoners so atrociously slaughtered on the night of April 11 are known as the "Martyrs of Tacubaya." General Márquez, directly responsible, declared it to be the order of his superior, the then Clerical president, Miramón.

This barbarous massacre divided even the Clerical Party in Mexico. It aroused the United States and Great Britain to indignant protest. The presidency and government of Juárez were recognized by the United States, and the Liberals were permitted to obtain both munitions and volunteers from the friendly nation to the north of the Rio Grande.

Juárez, knowing that the Church was at the base of most of the country's ills, undertook at least to

weaken its power. The first of his *Leyes de Reforma* was the nationalization of all ecclesiastic property—valued at about forty-five million dollars. This was followed by the establishment of civil marriages and registration, the Church having been charging such enormous fees for this that the marriage ceremony had been almost wholly dispensed with among all but the very wealthy. Then came the suppression of purely religious communities, which were proving a menace; the toleration and even the encouragement of faiths other than the Roman Catholic; and—the greatest blow perhaps, for it had been the source of tremendous wealth to the Church—the civil control of cemeteries:

The Clericals were weakened because of financial straits; but these Reform Laws of Juárez caused such outbursts, such violent protest on the part of the Church that an era of constant bloodshed and anarchy now set in. Such outrages were perpetrated, such crimes committed, against foreigners as well as Mexicans, that both Europe and America felt it time to intervene. In Paris, Spain secretly signed an agreement to support Miramón and the Clerical Party, and establish a monarchy in Mexico. A similar but joint intervention was discussed by Great Britain, Spain, France and Prussia. On the other hand, the American minister in Vera Cruz, McLean, representing President Buchanan, agreed to support Juárez as



"President of the Republic of the United States of Mexico."

All of these came to naught, however—America being herself at the portal of civil war—and so the world was saved from a colossal cataclysm had Europe and America been ranged on different sides and with different ideals in the Mexican conflict.

All the time this discussion was taking place, fighting was going on constantly in the war-torn country. The Clericals, or Conservatives, being in desperate need of funds, borrowed from Jecker, a Swiss banker in Mexico, \$750,000, giving in return bonds of the face value of \$15,000,000, and bearing six per cent. interest. This amount being expended, the Clericals now entered the British Legation and seized \$630,000 in specie placed there under seal for British bondholders. A month later, Miramón fled, his government was overthrown, and Juárez entered Mexico City, January 11, 1861.

He found himself called upon to answer to Great Britain, France and other foreign powers for the excesses of the Clericals as well as those of his own party. The Mexican government was in a state of financial collapse. To give it a chance to recuperate so that order might be restored and national obligations be met, Juárez decreed that interest on foreign debts be suspended for two years. One of his first acts was to expel the Spanish minister, the papal dele-

gate, the ministers from Guatemala and Ecuador, two archbishops and four bishops, because of their active work in furthering the cause of the reactionaries.

Miramón had considered it wise to leave the country, but Márquez and other leaders of the Clerical Party were busy fomenting another revolution purposely to precipitate foreign intervention. For in that way, they believed, a monarchy could be established and the Church again come into power. In their efforts they were aided by the attitude of France.

Napoleon III had long dreamed of a Central America under his control, and his ambitions especially had pictured for France an interoceanic canal across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. What better opportunity to realize his dreams than this, while Mexico was prostrated financially, swept with hatred, and torn from end to end in bloody conflict? There was a certain Monroe Doctrine, to be sure, but no one could enforce it, for America herself was deep in civil war. Even so, however, the wily Napoleon felt that it would be politic to have an excuse for his act. He looked about him, and then seized upon the claims of the Swiss banker, Jecker, who had made the loan to the Clericals and now held seemingly worthless bonds. Jecker, however, was a native of Switzerland, not of France. To Napoleon that was a small matter; he at once issued a royal decree nationalizing Jecker, and then France took up the banker's claims.

In October, 1861, France, Great Britain and Spain agreed upon joint intervention, and on December 14 Vera Cruz was occupied by Spanish troops. The French and the English fleets arrived soon afterward.

President Juárez issued a manifesto showing the injustice of the European aggression, declaring the good faith of the Mexicans in their willingness to settle all foreign claims compatible with justice and national honor, denouncing any outside meddling in purely internal affairs, and calling upon all Mexicans to lay aside their political partisanship and unite to form one undivided nation to oust these invaders and save the country. The republican Liberals answered this appeal to a man; but the Clericals, having themselves purposely brought about the situation, hoping for a monarchy, now either sided outright with the foreigners or remained neutral.

Juárez proposed a conference with representatives of the three foreign invaders, and this, La Convención de la Soledad, took place in Orizaba, the allied powers meanwhile being permitted to occupy Córdoba, Orizaba and Tehuacán. With the assurance of the settlement of all just claims, Mexico's independence was formally recognized. But this was not the intent of the ambitious Napoleon, who, among other things, wished to pay off some debts to Austria by putting the Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Austrian Emperor, upon the throne of Mexico. The French rep-

representative, therefore, backed by the Mexican Clericals, insisted upon participating in the politics of the country. England and Spain, convinced of Juárez' good faith, withdrew their forces, after concluding advantageous treaties, and left Mexico in March, 1862. France, on the other hand, sent more troops. And while the French seized Orizaba, Córdoba and Tehuacán, the Clerical Conservatives were busy stirring up trouble in the interior.

At the end of April, 1862, the French army of six thousand men set out to take the city of Puebla. They arrived late on May 4, and on May 5 occurred one of the most memorable battles in the history of Mexico. General Zaragoza, holding Puebla with less than four thousand troops, all poorly equipped, completely routed the French and compelled them to flee, under cover of a blinding rainstorm, back toward Orizaba. The glorious 5th of May, *Cinco de Mayo*, is now a national holiday, and is further commemorated by being the name of a street or avenue in practically every city in Mexico.

In September three thousand more French troops, under General Forey, arrived in Vera Cruz, and spent the following few months in recruiting and training allies among the Mexican Conservatives. In the spring they again marched upon Puebla, which now was defended by General Ortega, assisted by Porfirio Díaz and other able generals. For sixty-two days, with

scant munitions and even less food, the Mexicans held their city, repulsing assault after assault. Their horses, their mules, even all the dogs, were eaten, and only after they had been for three days with no nourishment except tea brewed from orange leaves did the Mexicans surrender and the French gain undisputed entrance to the town. This defense of Puebla, by an army lacking food and equipment, and vastly inferior to the French troops in both numbers and military science, is one of the glorious deeds in Mexican history.

With the fall of Puebla, Juárez moved his capital to San Luis Potosí, later to Saltillo, then to Chihuahua, and eventually to El Paso del Norte—now Ciudad Juárez. The French entered Mexico City on June 7, receiving an enthusiastic welcome from the Clergy, who already saw themselves once more in power. But the French general, Forey, having gained the capital, lost no time in proclaiming the real intention of the French. This was that Mexico should forthwith become a monarchy, and its first sovereign, to be known as the Emperor of Mexico, should be Maximilian, brother of the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria; the throne to be hereditary. In case Maximilian for any reason should be unable to accept the throne thus offered to him, His Majesty Napoleon III would name some other Catholic prince.

With the French army wholly in control, there was nothing to be done except to accept the wishes of

Napoleon. Until the arrival of the new Emperor, the government was in the hands of an infamous triumvirate of Clericals, the chief of whom was Archbishop Labastida. It was he who had been the main instigator of French intervention; in Paris he had worked assiduously to bring this about; but now in power, he was scheming to get for the Church the uppermost hand in Mexican affairs. General Forey discovered this and replaced him by a weaker man. The deposed and furious Archbishop promptly retaliated by excommunicating the entire French army!

Maximilian's reception at Vera Cruz on May 29, 1864, was frigid; at Orizaba and Puebla it was mildly temperate; but at the city of Mexico, which he entered on June 12, it was frenziedly enthusiastic. With all the pomp of a European court, he set up his empire, striving to outrival the glory of the Austrian court which notoriously was the most extravagant in Europe. Even from the beginning, however, the Emperor's rule was troublous. One of his first political acts brought pause to the Conservatives. It was the selection of a majority of Liberals in forming his ministry. This was not done thoughtlessly. The Emperor himself was far more interested in botany than in politics; but there was a "power behind the throne" in the form of his consort, Carlota, daughter of King Leopold I of Belgium. On her advice Maximilian relied absolutely and bothered himself not at all with public matters.



Carlota saw at once through the scheming Clericals, and realized their danger should the power of the Church grow too strong. Therefore, Maximilian formed his ministry mostly of decided Liberals. When he went further and declared for the toleration of Protestantism, and proclaimed the Church subservient to the Crown, the very Church which had brought about the Mexican empire now denounced the Emperor. He was a foreigner, an intruder. But with the French army, assisted by Austrians and Belgians, overrunning the country there was little the Clericals could do. They had made their bed, but they found it not so pleasant to lie in it.

All this time the Republicans were fiercely determined upon the liberation of their country. They could not feel that it was free while there was a foreign ruler on the throne placed there by armed force. Benito Juárez in the north and Porfirio Díaz in the south were carrying on constant guerilla warfare against the invaders. Díaz, in Oaxaca, was captured by the French, but he refused to accept parole, and when he was imprisoned he made his escape, again to take up the war for freedom.

Maximilian and his luxurious court in Mexico were giving balls and receptions and elaborate entertainments. Carlota took her daily ride in a coach lavishly decorated with silver and pure gold. Every extravagance was indulged in, to go a bit beyond the pomp

and show of the Austrian court. But all of this, and the payment of the foreign army, took money, and more and more money. Two enormous loans were negotiated in London; and these, with many other Maximilian burdens, were thrust upon the Mexican people. But what mattered that: the Emperor and his consort were thoroughly enjoying their glory. Chapultepec Castle was transformed, under the magic of Carlota's brain and Mexican gold, into a second Miramar, with all the luxury of their Italian palace duplicated and even surpassed here. In her silver coach, with a retinue of followers, Carlota "saw and was seen." In the famous cave of Cacahuamilpa, near Cuernavaca—the largest and most beautiful cave in Mexico—the Empress had one of her lackeys scratch on a wall well back in the cavern: "María Carlota reached this point." A few years later, when a republic had replaced the monarchy, the president wrote significantly beneath Carlota's inscription: "Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada passed beyond."

Carlota felt that she had the Clericals well curbed; but the Republicans were troubling her. So on October 31, 1865, the Emperor issued the *Ley Marcial*, which was to prove his own death-warrant. This Martial Law declared all Juarists to be bandits and ordered that they be shot when captured. The eager Clericals took this royal mandate too literally. They set upon defenseless towns and villages, murdering, burning, pil-

laging, without mercy. These atrocities aroused intense indignation in the United States. At last its own civil war was ended, and it was able to stand back of its Monroe Doctrine. Popular feeling in America was very strong against this invasion by a European power while the United States, weakened by internal strife, was helpless to go to the defense of its neighbor. William Henry Seward, Secretary of State, took the matter up with Napoleon III, and so forceful were his demands that when an American army under General Sheridan actually began marching toward the Rio Grande, Napoleon quickly gave in and agreed to withdraw all French troops from Mexico.

When Maximilian learned this disturbing news, he decided to abdicate; but he had not reckoned upon Carlota. She had drunk deep of the joys of power and had tasted of the glories of a golden crown; to go back to Austria as a mere Duchess was unthinkable. She ordered Maximilian to remain upon his throne while she went in her own regal person and laid the cause before Napoleon III and Pope Pius IX.

But for once Carlota overestimated her powers. First her father, the King of Belgium, was approached; but Belgium was not in a position, even for Carlota, to oppose the United States; if, however, Napoleon should withdraw his agreement with Seward and decide to keep Maximilian on the Mexican throne, then Belgium would stand by her friend France. Carlota,

furious with her father, went then to Napoleon III, using all her wiles to win him over; but already Sheridan was on the march to the Mexican border—and the American army is something to be reckoned with. Napoleon did not dare break his agreement; for the French scarcely could hold their own even against the Mexicans who were fighting for a republic. So the sweetest of Carlota's smiles and the softest of her persuasions had no effect upon Napoleon's decision. Enraged, she changed her tactics from a plea to a demand; but to her violent ravings Napoleon was adamant, and paid no attention even to her threat of the dire things that would befall France did he not stand back of the brother of the Emperor of Austria, the daughter of the King of Belgium, and the rulers of the Empire of Mexico. Failing with Napoleon, Carlota went in a wild fury to the Pope; and by that time the strain was too much for her; she went stark mad. From Rome she was sent back to her father in Belgium a raving lunatic. And Napoleon, true to his word, for he dared not be otherwise, ordered the withdrawal of the French troops from Mexico, and they began to evacuate the country in December, 1866.

Maximilian now was truly alarmed. Always he had had Carlota to fall back upon; without her he was helpless. But now he had neither his Carlota nor the French bayonets, for his army was fast leaving. There was but one thing to be done. Maximilian opened his

arms wide to the Clergy; and they fell into them bodily. But the Clergy were as treacherous now as they had been from the beginning. They had no use for Maximilian. They wanted themselves in power, and the sooner the Emperor was rid of, the better. When, therefore, the French troops withdrew from Mexico City, the Clericals advised Maximilian to seek refuge in Querétaro, where a remnant of his army remained. The Emperor fled there immediately. But already Querétaro was in a state of siege, with the Republicans closing in. Thus Maximilian found himself entrapped. While the city held out for a few weeks, it eventually had to capitulate, and the great Maximilian and two of his leading generals, Miramón and Méjia, were taken prisoner and condemned to die. The Republicans had not forgotten the Emperor's *Ley Marcial* which caused the brutal slaughter of many hundreds of Juarists.

But, after all, Maximilian had been but a weakling. And he had been an emperor. That he should be shot like an ordinary traitor seemed unfitting to the outside world. The President of the United States and the rulers of Great Britain, France and Austria all interceded to save the Emperor's life. Had it not been for his fatal *Ley Marcial* this would have been granted. But the Juarists had seen too many of their friends, their brothers and fathers, shot in cold blood while this man was leading a carefree life of revelry





*Courtesy, Consulado General de México in N. Y.*

**"FLOWER-BASKETS," CACAHUAMILPA CAVE**

Mexico's most famous cavern is as large and as beautiful  
as Mammoth Cave.





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### THE AQUEDUCT AT QUERÉTARO

This relic of colonial days is a conspicuous feature in the bare brown hills.

in his luxurious court. So the sentence remained. On June 18, 1867, Maximilian wrote a note of farewell to his beloved Carlota; and at sunrise the following morning he fell before a firing-squad on El Cerro de las Campanas—the Hill of the Bells—outside the city of Querétaro.

Porfirio Díaz in the meantime was covering himself with glory. With his Republican army he swept upon the great Clerical center, Puebla, the City of Churches; and from that victory he marched upon the capital, Mexico City, and wrested it from the Royalist-Clericals. On July 20, the last Conservative stronghold fell, and once more there was a republic in Mexico, and the Liberal party was in power. Juárez was re-elected to the presidency; and again reelected four years later, 1871; but already another revolution had broken out, this time in Tampico, and had rapidly spread. Juárez died in 1872 and was automatically succeeded by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada.

But now the Republicans themselves were divided; for the *Porfiristas* claimed that Porfirio Díaz, the hero of the hour, should be president. Thus insurrection and brigandage—the inevitable consequences of political disagreement—once more were rampant, the Clericals helping to maintain the general disorder by cropping up with insurrections of their own whenever peace seemed to reign among the Republicans.

In the midst of this upheaval, who should bob up but Santa Ana, offering his services to help overthrow the government, and hoping thus to pluck a rich plum for himself. But Mexico already had had enough and too much of him. For his pains he received a sentence of eight years in prison.

An unusual war now added to the general turbulence of the country. A Tepic Indian, known as "The Tiger of Alica," undertook to restore the ancient Aztec empire. With eight thousand followers he marched upon Guadalajara, while simultaneously another Indian army swooped upon Mazatlán, and still another upon Zacatecas. It was six months before this insurrection was fully curbed and the Tiger of Alica executed.

The Conservatives had expected to find an ally in President Lerdo; but he proved to be the opposite, for he was truly alarmed by the strength of the Church and sought in every way to curb it. He forbade secret religious societies, of which there were many in the capital; he suppressed the pernicious work of the Jesuits; he encouraged the establishment of Protestant missions which were meeting with violent opposition on the part of the Catholics. Even the Sisters of Charity, who were using their cloak of charity or religion to meddle in politics, were suppressed, and left the country in 1875.

In Michoacan the Clerical battle-cry of "*Religión*

*y fueros!*”—“The Church and Privileges” or “The Benefit of the Clergy”—again was taken up and crimes innumerable were committed against individual Liberals and towns where the Liberal element predominated.

The state of Oaxaca wanted peace. It was tired of the everlasting squabbles going on at the capital. No sooner would its crops be planted or its fields be plowed than all its men would rush off to war; for while the Oaxacan is the most peace-loving of Mexicans, he also is the first to grab up his rifle or his machete when the call comes. But now too many years had been spent in needless wars. Oaxaca would withdraw from so unstable a government and form a republic of its own, with a Zapotec Indian, Fidencio Hernández, as its president. The *pronunciamiento* was issued in January, 1876. Hernández was greatly loved by all Oaxacans, but he was not a leader; the brains of the secession and the consequent revolution was General Mariano Jiménez.

Neighboring states joined Oaxaca. President Lerdo hastily dispatched an army to subdue these *insurrectos*; but the revolution was gaining headway too quickly to be checked, and it took the country by storm when Porfirio Díaz placed himself at the head of it, at Palo Blanco, in the north. Matamoros fell into his hands without a struggle.

But a large government force was marching against

this new leader, and Díaz felt it expedient to retreat and make his way as best he could to Oaxaca, where the heart and strength of the revolution lay. Disguising himself as a Cuban doctor, he took passage on a boat sailing from New Orleans for Vera Cruz. As the boat lay off Tampico while its cargo for that port was being unloaded, a government searching party came on board, and Díaz, in spite of his disguise, was recognized. It was four miles to shore, and the water was infested with sharks; but Díaz well knew that the alternative would be the firing-squad. So at dusk he slipped overboard. A sudden squall had come up and the sea was choppy; four long miles lay ahead; only a stanch swimmer could battle against the surging waves and fight off the sharks, which even now were cruising in upon him in their sickening curves.

But the sharks had no chance. Díaz had been seen as he dropped into the water, and a small boat was quickly sent after him. Brought back on board the steamer, he was placed under heavy guard. But it was an American ship: the Stars and Stripes floated from its mast; and Díaz promptly claimed the protection of the American flag. This was assured him as long as he remained on the vessel. But Lerdo's officers would be ready to grab him once they cast anchor at Vera Cruz.

Escape from this new dilemma Díaz owed to the friendly purser. At early dawn a life-preserver was



thrown overboard; it was seen by some of the crew, and word was rapidly spread that Díaz had attempted escape and been eaten by the sharks. Government men searched the ship, but the missing leader was nowhere to be found. All this time Díaz was crouching in physical torture in a sofa-trunk, where the purser had hidden him in his own quarters. For days he had to remain in his uncomfortable hiding-place. The purser smuggled him food, and at Vera Cruz disguised him as one of the crew and sent him with the labor-gang to unload the cargo. Thus he reached shore without difficulty, and made his way to Oaxaca, while the report of his untimely death was being sent from Vera Cruz to Mexico.

The Díaz forces now scored one victory after another against the government troops; and in November Lerdo felt it high time for him and his cabinet to flee from the country. This they did, taking with them all the available public funds; and when Díaz entered Mexico a few days later he was received with joyous acclamation.

The topsyturvy country now had three presidents. In Mexico City, Díaz had assumed the executive power. In New York, Lerdo, lavishly spending the stolen government funds, declared himself still to be president of the country. In Guanajuato, José María Iglesias had set up a separate government, proclaimed himself President of the Republic of Mexico, and



formed his cabinet. Iglesias was driven by the Díaz forces back to Guadalajara, and thence to the Pacific coast, where, like Lerdo, he was forced to make his escape to the United States.

Díaz, temporarily alone in the field, now turned his attention to stabilizing the government, which so sadly needed it. In May, 1877, Congress formally declared him president for the ensuing four years.

Mexico at this turbulent time could have had no firmer hand at the helm than Porfirio Díaz. While the country, war-torn for a century, could not at once settle down to peace—there were minor insurrections, a Lerdo uprising in the north, boundary disputes in the south—Díaz nevertheless went far, during these first years of his presidency, toward putting Mexico on its way to real peace and progress. He undertook, as the country's greatest need, immediate political and financial reform, and in instituting this his aim was not to antagonize any one faction. Thus he succeeded in a large measure in welding together the various parties throughout the country into one united Mexican nation. He encouraged the building of new railroad and telegraph lines; he granted ship subsidies, to open up new ports; he resumed diplomatic relations with several foreign powers. Under the beneficent and selfless policy of Porfirio Díaz, internal progress, after all the years of fighting, was actually being achieved.

At the end of his four-year term, the entire nation

wanted Díaz reelected. But he insisted upon adhering to the constitution, and by its provisions a president could not succeed himself. At least one term of four years must intervene. In 1880, therefore, Díaz gave way to Manuel González; and for the second time in the history of the country the executive power passed legally and peacefully from one president to another.

The iron hand of Díaz had wrested the country from chaos into a semblance of order. González carried the splendid work still farther and would have left the presidency with an unblemished record had not avarice overwhelmed him at the end. His associates had been carrying on a systematic method of enriching themselves through public funds, and González saw no reason why he alone should remain a pauper. His entire policy then changed to one of accumulating enormous wealth for himself; and in this he succeeded so well that at the end of his term hatred and disorder were rampant, and with one accord the nation welcomed Díaz back into power in 1884, and the constitution was amended so that he might succeed himself at the end of each four-year term.

There began then an era of peace and content, of prosperity and progress, such as Mexico had not known for more than a hundred years.



## X. THE PEACEFUL DAYS OF DÍAZ

THE GOLDEN AGE OF MEXICO  
THE SUPPRESSION OF BRIGANDAGE  
THE ENGLISH IN BELIZE  
YAQUIS ON THE WARPATH  
UNKNOWN QUINTANA ROO  
A SERIES OF CALAMITIES  
THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE  
THE STORY OF THE VIRGIN AT PÁTZCUARO  
THE MIRACULOUS PAINTING AT LA PIEDAD  
OTHER SACRED IMAGES  
BEAUTIFUL JALAPA  
THE VIRGIN OF GUANAJUATO  
THE DISPOSAL OF DÍAZ RIVALS  
CREELMAN'S INTERVIEW AT CHAPULTEPEC  
THE FLUENT LAWYER OF COAHUILA  
THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



## X

### THE PEACEFUL DAYS OF DÍAZ

**F**OR twenty-six and a half consecutive years Díaz remained in the presidency, being re-elected again and again. This period was indeed the Golden Age of Mexico; for not since the dawn of the republic had there been peace for so long a time. The prosperity and general progress following in the wake of peace enabled Mexico to take her place among the leading nations of the world. Díaz had at heart the welfare of the country, and to that end he labored with an iron hand, with keen wisdom, and with far-sighted discretion.

Agriculture was encouraged by the protection of high tariffs, especially on cotton, silk, wine, tobacco, and cocoa, and by dividing large holdings of land among many owners and offering rewards for production. Public works were carried on both as general developments and to give employment to large numbers of idle men who otherwise would have been mischief-makers. The great drainage canal to protect the Valley of Mexico from inundation was finished after four hundred years spent upon its construction. The development of the immense natural resources of the



republic by foreign enterprise was encouraged. Schools and colleges were established, and education was made compulsory. Literature and science were furthered. In the early years liberty of the press was sanctioned, and newspapers all over the country were encouraged to discuss freely political and economic questions of the day; but later Díaz had to change his tactics, and newspapers dared take only the attitude the president wished them to take.

A notable act of the Díaz régime was the suppression of brigandage by the unique method of turning the brigands themselves into rural police—the beginning of the present efficient system of *rurales*. Important with their new authority and dressed in governmental uniforms, these ex-highwaymen became formidable and loyal guardians of the peace. This same clever scheme Díaz used with political rivals. If one man appeared to have any ambitions toward the presidency, Díaz found another with equally strong backing, and ranged the two against each other.

Porfirio Díaz was president only in name; in reality he was dictator. His rule was absolute. Those who obeyed his mandates unquestioningly were rewarded with large tracts of land or other material benefits. Those who opposed him felt continuous misfortune, in one form or another, descend upon them. But whatever his tactics, however high-handed his methods, Díaz was the one ruler Mexico needed to keep the

country at peace. A large part of his success was due to the careful selection of his Cabinet. Limantour, Secretary of the Treasury, was responsible for many economic reforms of great benefit to the country, and the financial stability of the Díaz régime was brought about solely by the skill and persistence of this man.

But while peace reigned and the country smiled with prosperity, these years were not all continuous sunshine.

The English colony in Belize—British Honduras—was a source of great annoyance and constant menace to the Mexicans, for bandits in Yucatan and Maya *insurrectos* would dash down there when pursued and claim to be on English territory, whereas if the English sought to arrest them they declared it to be Mexican territory. So in 1893 the boundary between Yucatan and Belize was definitely settled by treaty. All might now have gone very well; but the British were given so much more territory than seemed to be their right that Guatemala immediately was encouraged to disregard her own boundary treaty of 1882 and encroach upon Chiapas, to see if she, too, might not get a good slice of Mexico. Through energetic action on the part of Díaz, and the mediation of the United States, war was averted, and Guatemala reluctantly accepted her former frontier.

The Yaqui Indians who roam the mountains of Sonora, and who a half-century ago were no less blood-thirsty than the Apaches, found their mountain fast-

nesses being invaded more and more by seekers of gold and silver mines. The white men were despoiling their hunting-grounds, they were damming their rivers, they were invading their barranca retreats; the wild freedom of their Sierra Madre country was being threatened. So a general Yaqui uprising was planned. It was begun by small groups who swooped down upon isolated haciendas, murdered and pillaged, and quickly retreated to their mountain strongholds. All of Sonora was thoroughly alarmed. Díaz, called upon to suppress the danger, sent a large body of troops; and their appearance set the entire Yaqui tribe upon the warpath. With their mountain training and their wild life, these Indians made a formidable enemy, and it was six months before they were finally subdued. Today the Yaquis who have come into contact with civilization are an industrious, good-natured, and seemingly peaceable tribe; but in the remotest parts of the Sierra Madre there are still groups of wholly unsubjugated Yaquis, as wild as the fiercest of their forefathers.

Trouble with the Maya Indians resulted, in 1904, in the political formation of the Territory of Quintana Roo. Even today this is the least known region in Mexico, parts of it never having been entered by white men. Its wild jungles form a secure refuge for bandits and outlaws, and in the remotest depths of its forests lives a branch of the Maya tribe wholly unin-

fluenced by the white man's civilization. Quintana Roo has some of the most beautiful tropical scenery in Mexico. Like Yucatan, of which it is really a part, the foundation of the land is coral. Above the rich sandy soil are dense tropical jungles, where vines in riotous tangle spread like a gay green coverlet over the tops of giant trees. Coral reefs, jungled forests, and mangrove swamps edge the coast, and beyond them lies the changing blue of the Caribbean Sea. In the south are a few large lakes, and running back from them into the jungle ancient ruins show that a prehistoric people once lingered here. Bright-hued flowers and bright-plumaged birds; dense forests, dark and mysterious; flats covered with gray-green shrubs, or patches of sand starred yellow with flowers; coral-pink beaches, wild rough caves, and reefs where the breakers swirl in and seethe away their fury. That is Quintana Roo as the white man knows it. What delightful mysteries lie yet unexplored the silent Maya does not tell.

The years of the Díaz régime saw their share of the natural calamities that so often spread destruction through Mexico. Earthquakes destroyed the city of Chilpancingo, and were frequent happenings throughout the states of the south. An eruption of the volcano of Colima, heavy snows in the mountains of the north, and cyclones and torrential rains on the Gulf of California coast, wrought havoc. Fire destroyed

half of Mérida and did great damage in Vera Cruz and other cities. An earthquake in Mexico City followed so closely upon the assassination there of an ex-president of Guatemala that the Indians believed the Guatemalan gods had sent the earthquake purposely to destroy their city; being fair-minded gods, however, they were satisfied with doing a little damage and frightening the inhabitants, for the assassination, after all, had been committed by a Guatemalan and not by a Mexican.

These Díaz years were filled, too, to more than overflowing with gala days. There were innumerable national and local holidays to be celebrated. And in addition there were, all over the country, an extraordinary number of images of the Virgin that needed to be crowned, and each coronation was the occasion for long and happy preparation, for joyous anticipation, and then for a glorious day of religious effervescence and festive enjoyment.

The most sumptuous of the holy coronations took place on October 12, 1895, when the *Santísima Virgen de Guadalupe* received her gorgeous jeweled crown. Not only had *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* performed innumerable "miracles" through all the centuries since her first thoroughly-miraculous appearance to Juan Diego in 1531, but she was the patroness of the Mexican nation, and her banner had led the Mexicans to freedom in the War of Independence. Her corona-

tion, therefore, was an event indeed, talked of joyously for weeks ahead of the chosen day. In the elaborate ceremonies accompanying the placing of the crown on the image, it was only fitting that every bishop in Mexico, several from the United States, one from Spain, and one from South America should take part, while the people, mostly Indians who had walked for miles to the Virgin's shrine, gave themselves over first to a frenzy of religious fervor and adoration, and then to the spirit of gay fiesta.

Another celebration in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe took place all over the country, on the important occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary, in 1910, of the adoption of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* as the patroness of Mexican liberty. For three days, from October 9 to 12, the celebration lasted. Mexico from end to end was strung with banners, churchbells were rung merrily, myriads of candles were lighted, and skyrockets innumerable proclaimed the joyous event.

The coronation of the *Santísima Virgen de la Salud* occurred in the charming little lake-village of Pátzcuaro in 1899. This delightful town in Michoacan climbs up a rolling hillside; maize-fields and flower-patches run up and down the hills beside it, blue peaks extend beyond, cutting against the skyline, and in front lies the silver sheet of the lake, rippling blue and green as the wind sweeps low. Bishop Quiroga, whose mem-



ory still is lovingly cherished in Michoacan, considered Pátzcuaro, with its invigorating mountain air and the greater tonic of its beauty, a fitting place for a Virgin of Health; for here, if anywhere, could she perform astounding miracles. So in 1548 he had the present image of the *Virgen de la Salud* made; and that she might at once be venerated he spread abroad the story that a spring—which now supplies the city with water—had gushed forth from the arid hillside when at this Virgin's order he had tapped upon a rock with his staff. The image immediately was looked upon with the utmost awe and reverence by the credulous Indians. It is thoroughly ugly, but is highly venerated, and Indians even to this day make long pilgrimages to worship at its shrine. Many miracles of healing have been attributed to the *Virgen de la Salud*. The hopelessly ill are brought from the hot lowlands to pray at her altar; and under the magic of the mountain air, the tonic of the lake, the tremendous power of faith, and the beauty of the blue hills and the bluer sky, they "miraculously" recover, and out of a grateful heart leave behind them, in a box conveniently provided near the Virgin's shrine, a goodly share of their worldly wealth, whether copper, silver, or gold.

The two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the miraculous painting of the *Virgen de la Piedad* called for an elaborate celebration in the little town of La Piedad, near Mexico City. In 1650, according to the story

which the Mexicans thoroughly believe, a Dominican monk who had been ordered to New Spain commissioned a Roman artist to paint for him a picture of the Virgin and the dead Christ. But when the ship was ready to sail, no more than a mere sketchy outline was finished. The monk decided to take the canvas with him anyway, planning to have the picture painted in Mexico. On the high seas a violent storm arose, growing every moment in such fury that at last the captain gave up all hope of saving the ship. But not so the good monk. He unrolled his canvas of the roughly sketched Virgin, called the crew and the passengers together, and jointly they prayed to the picture to still the tempest, promising to erect a shrine to this Virgin of Pity if she would protect them. Immediately and miraculously the storm ceased and the water became quiet. The monk rolled up his now precious canvas and not once was it touched until the ship came into port at Vera Cruz. There it was unrolled, that the grateful sailors might worship it, and to their astonishment they found a beautiful painting, executed by the hand of a master-artist—none other than the Virgin herself—and finished to the smallest detail. Great was their reverence, and the *Santuario de la Piedad* was built as a shrine for this Virgin who miraculously stilled the seas and then, further to show her divine power, painted her own portrait and that of the dead *Cristo*.

In 1902, with "devociones ferventísimas," the image of the *Santísima Virgen de la Luz* was canonically crowned in León. So important an event as the coronation of this image of the Virgin of Light required the presence of fifteen Mexican bishops and one American, and took place amid the greatest pomp and ceremony. In Jalisco the alleged miraculous image of *Nuestra Señora de San Juan de los Lagos*—Our Lady of St. John of the Lakes—received her golden diadem. In Tlascala the coronation of the image of the *Santísima Virgen de Ocotlán* was the occasion for frenzied acclamations, followed by a gala fiesta. The miracle-working *Virgen de la Soledad* was crowned with all due ceremony in Oaxaca. This Oaxacan Virgin, held in the utmost veneration by the lowly Indians, has a certain beauty that calls for admiration even in an unbeliever.

A local celebration occurred in Jalapa in 1907 when the cathedral, begun nearly a century and a half previously, was completed. The church is built against a hill and literally climbs up the steep slope, the smooth-tiled floor slanting downward from the altar like a broad toboggan-slide. Terry flippantly states that "it would be relatively easy for one to backslide in this church."

Jalapa, the capital of Vera Cruz, is one of the most picturesque of all Mexican cities. The old-fashioned stucco houses with their red-tiled roofs are all but

hidden by the luxuriant tropical and subtropical vegetation that fairly claims the city. Its Indian name means "The Place of the Sandy River," but Maximilian named it "The City of Flowers." Flaming vines run over the houses and curtains and festoons of them droop from the balconies. Shrubbery and gorgeous trees crowd in the plazas and beautify the patios. The narrow tortuous streets are so steep that only a sure-footed burro can compass them. Like the streets of Cadiz and other Old World towns, they are laid with huge cobblestones and slant toward the middle, where a narrow gutter carries off the water on rainy days and serves for a pavement when the sun shines. There are frequent days of mist and drizzling rain; and it is this that gives the luxuriance of vegetation.

When Cortés and his men climbed up from the coast in 1519, they found Jalapa a delightfully quaint little village; today, with its odd Moorish houses, and with its flaming flowers and beautiful trees, it is a charming city. And it lies like an island of loveliness in a veritable sea of green—undulating banana-plants, vast groves of coffee-trees, plantations of tobacco, or else jungle wastes of tree-ferns color-spattered with exquisite orchids. In the distance are lofty mountains. Even the snow-white majesty of Orizaba is seen, on clear days, standing against the southern sky; while far, far off to the east is a sparkling silver streak that is the Gulf.

An important coronation of an image of the Virgin occurred in 1908 when an elaborate gold and bejeweled crown was placed on the head of the little wooden image of *Nuestra Señora de Guanajuato*. The story of this crudely carved little image at Guanajuato is at least an interesting one, however much it may lack in truth.

At about the beginning of the sixth century, the tradition states, a pious Christian had a vineyard on one of the hillsides that roll away from Granada. There seemed to be something miraculous about this vineyard, for always the grapes grew larger, the vines were more healthy, the crops more abundant, than those of any other vineyard in Spain. And the more the vineyard flourished, the more pious became the good man; he never ceased to offer up prayers to the Blessed Virgin—nor to give bountifully to the Church. One evening as he stood looking over the long rows of straight stalks that soon would be flourishing vines, he was so overcome with gratitude that on that very spot he kneeled and, crossing his hands over one of the stalks, thanked the Virgin for her protection. The next morning when he returned to the field, the piece of grapevine on which he had rested his hands had changed into a beautiful image of the Virgin—the same ugly little image now at Guanajuato. The peasant ran with it to the nearest priest; and for two centuries it was greatly venerated in its shrine near Granada.





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

#### SEMINARIO DE SAN MARTÍN

There is a gripping beauty about the centuries-old cathedrals of Mexico. This one at Tepozotlán dates back to 1584.





*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### LA COLUMNA DE LA INDEPENDENCIA

This striking monument to Mexican Independence stands in the Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City's loveliest avenue.

When the Moors swept into Spain, the Christians hid this sacred image far back in a cave; and there it lay for more than eight centuries, its existence forgotten. But when the Virgin was ready for the image to be found she directed some gypsies to the cave, and then sent a furious rainstorm so that they would seek shelter. And there, of course, they found it. The eight centuries in the dampness of the dirt-cave had not affected the grape-wood image; and that alone proved that it was miraculous, for its record was hunted up and it was found to be then more than a thousand years old.

In 1557, Philip II of Spain, having received enormous wealth from the Guanajuato mines, and anticipating still more treasure from the same source, considered Guanajuato a city to be especially favored; and so he sent it this sacred image of the Virgin, which at once became *Nuestra Señora de Guanajuato*. After having been exalted to this position in Mexico, the image then remained uncrowned for three and a half centuries; but perhaps she did not resent this, for after all that was but a brief space in the long period since her grapevine days. How old the image actually is none can say, but at least it dates back more than four centuries and is interesting if not beautiful.

Early in Díaz' presidency he had expressed his policy as "*Poca política, mucha administración,*" and this held good until in 1901 he became very ill. An-

ticipating his death, the people began looking about them for another leader; and even though Díaz recovered quickly, the idea already had taken root that this man had held the executive power for a very long time and perhaps some one else—General Bernardo Reyes, for example—might make a better president and be less of a dictator. Díaz had been reelected so often that he fully expected to hold the office for life. But a new party, calling itself the Anti-reelectionists, now came into being, and began to work quietly but effectively all over the country. One of Díaz' unpopular acts was to make General Bernardo Reyes governor of Nuevo León in spite of the fact that Francisco Reyes had been elected by the people. Such high-handedness was seized upon and thoroughly exploited by the Anti-reelectionists.

In 1908 the Democratic Party, which was an outgrowth of the Anti-reelectionists, came into existence, with General Bernardo Reyes for its presidential candidate at the next election, 1910. With a rapidity both astonishing and alarming to Díaz, this new party grew in strength until the election promised to be a landslide for Reyes. This did not at all suit Díaz, and early in 1910 he sent the rival candidate off to Europe on a supposedly important military mission. Thus Reyes was eliminated, for a presidential candidate is required to be in the republic at the time of the election.

In the spring of 1908 Díaz gave a noted interview

in Chapultepec Castle to James Creelman, representing an American magazine. The Mexicans were amazed when the article appeared in print. The most startling of its statements, given in Díaz' own words, declared his belief that the country was now ready for democracy, and his willingness and even eagerness to step aside for any man legally elected. This caused the greatest incredulity and comment. Many Mexicans believed the statements to be a proof of Díaz' decrepitude and mental incapacity; others declared his words had no depth or meaning and were uttered merely to see where he stood with the Mexican people; while still others claimed that, steeped in flattery, Díaz believed himself so immensely popular that by expressing his intention of quitting the presidency after all the long years, there would be a loud and general clamor from all over the nation begging him to remain—which would be vastly pleasing to his vanity. Whatever may have been the basis of the Creelman interview, its result could not have been what Díaz either anticipated or wanted.

Before discussion of this astonishing article had subsided there appeared, in the fall of 1908, a book which quickly became notorious and ran through two large editions before Díaz could suppress it. Its title was "*La sucesión presidencial en 1910*"—"The Presidential Succession in 1910"—and its author was a young lawyer of Monterrey, Francisco I. Madero. On the sur-

face the book praised Díaz with glowing words of adulation, but its unmistakable undercurrent was bold criticism of the Díaz administration and protest against his reelection.

An interesting political conference took place in El Paso, Texas, in October, 1909, when President Díaz and President Taft met to discuss important international questions. The conference was followed by banqueting, on both sides of the Rio Grande, and general good-feeling between the two nations.

The election year was 1910. There were few people who wanted Díaz to serve another term. The Anti-reelectionists were in the majority all over the country. They were ready to take Mexico by storm when their candidate, Bernardo Reyes, suddenly deserted them by going off to Europe. It took time to recover from this blow, and while they were getting their political breath, Francisco I. Madero saw his opportunity to take advantage of the propaganda the Anti-reelectionists had been spreading over the country and at the same time furnish them with, he sincerely believed, a most worthy candidate—none other than himself.

In Coahuila the Madero family was both wealthy and numerous. When Francisco declared his intention of becoming the president of Mexico, the entire hundred and more Maderos began a secret campaign to bring about his election, trusting to his promise—



which he faithfully kept—that once in office the distribution of political plums would begin at home. Madero himself started on a circuit of the country, stormily denouncing the Díaz régime, preaching anti-reelectionism, and expressing his modest willingness to accept the presidency in the coming election. Madero was an intellectual man and a fluent orator, and he left his audiences enthusiastic for his cause. His following grew with such bounds that Díaz at last began to take notice of this new rival. Reyes had been eliminated by the pseudo-mission abroad. Madero was no such weakling. Other tactics must be adopted. Díaz had him arrested for a fiery speech in Monterrey, thrust him into prison at San Luis Potosí, and there kept him safely out of the way until after the election was well over.

Thus it happened that though Díaz now was extremely unpopular, he nevertheless was reelected, to serve for six years from October 1, 1910, there being no other candidate with any backing in the field.

Then came the great Centennial celebration; and politics had to be foregone to do honor to the nation. September, 1910, marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the War of Independence. That was a great occasion in Mexican history, and only a celebration on a gigantic scale could be worthy of the event. Thirty-one foreign powers accepted the invitation to take part in the celebration, and their



envoys brought with them handsome presents—statues, paintings, rare tapestries—to the century-old republic. But the Centennial celebration, joyous as it proved to be, was nevertheless held under a cloud of political unrest and dissatisfaction.

At the presidential inauguration on October 1, Porfirio Díaz himself was jubilant. But he little knew how short-lived was to be his joy—and his presidency. More than a quarter of a century, uninterruptedly, he had held the highest executive power, and had held it most worthily, but the Golden Age of Mexico was coming to an end, and another era of bloodshed and anarchy was about to set in.

## XI. ON THE TIDE OF INSURRECTION

THE TAKING OF CIUDAD JUÁREZ  
DE LA BARRA, "THE WHITE PRESIDENT"  
MADERO'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY  
THE CAPTURE OF FÉLIX DÍAZ  
THE TRAGIC TEN DAYS  
THE TREACHERY OF VICTORIANO HUERTA  
THE "TAMPICO INCIDENT"  
AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF VERA CRUZ  
THE CARRANZA DÉBÂCLE  
FRANCISCO VILLA, BANDIT OF THE NORTH  
ZAPATA'S TERRIBLE HORDES  
PERSHING'S PUNITIVE EXPEDITION  
ADOLFO DE LA HUERTA  
PEACE AND PROGRESS UNDER OBREGÓN  
THE AGRARIAN LAW AND BOLSHEVISM  
THE DE LA HUERTA REVOLUTION



## XI

### ON THE TIDE OF INSURRECTION

WHEN Díaz felt himself secure in the presidency for another term, he magnanimously accepted bail for Madero and released him from prison. Madero at once escaped to Texas, to purchase arms and raise the cry of revolution. All over the country his followers were ready to take up arms for him. They had had enough of Díaz. North, south, east and west the Maderistas were organizing, planning to strike a simultaneous and decisive blow on November 20, 1910.

In Puebla, Aquiles Serdán was at the head of the revolutionists; but while he was perfecting his plans the police got word of his activities and came post-haste to arrest him. He put up a brave fight, but he was captured, shot, and his body exhibited about Puebla as a lesson to revolutionists.

In Chihuahua, Madero's "Plan of San Luis Potosí" was declared, and his followers in that state were organized under Pascual Orozco. As a vehement Anti-reelectionist, Orozco was a stanch supporter of Madero; but later he turned against him and added in no small way to the seething state of affairs in the

republic. In Morelos the Zapata brothers were heading the revolution; in Guerrero was Ambrosia Figuero. News of Serdán's execution caused a general uprising in Mexico City; and Díaz was hastily clapping into prison any one who was even suspected of disloyalty to him or his government. But that only added fuel to the flame; and the revolution grew in alarming strength. Ciudad Juárez was taken by the rebels after severe fighting on May 9, 1911. Orozco and Garibaldi led the attack and were ably assisted by Francisco Villa and José de la Luz Blanco. As Ciudad Juárez is separated from El Paso only by the Rio Grande, many shells fell on the Texas side and killed and wounded Americans in El Paso.

Ciudad Juárez, named for the great patriot of Mexico, was long called El Paso del Norte. The nomad Indians, wandering across the sun-scorched plains of Chihuahua, found here amid the cottonwoods that fringe the Rio Grande a pleasant place to linger. Their first crude huts soon gave way to adobe houses; and as the town grew in size and picturesqueness it grew also in interest. Being just across the river from El Paso, it became a resort for smugglers and bandits, and a hang-out for "bad" men, both Mexicans and Americans. Time and again it was raided by the notorious Gerónimo and his merciless Apaches. But the city today shows no evidence of its former exciting and

lawless experiences; it is an important railroad terminus, and a quaint and interesting town.

Francisco Madero had been carrying on his revolution from the safety of Texas, leaving the actual fighting to his well-chosen leaders. But now, with Ciudad Juárez in the hands of the rebels, he crossed the Rio Grande and with no more ado proclaimed himself President of the Republic of Mexico, with his capital at Ciudad Juárez. Grandiosely he selected his Cabinet; and in doing so he overlooked his staunchest supporter, Pascual Orozco. He was reminded of this little oversight at the point of a revolver held in Orozco's capable hand. Bystanders quickly saved Madero; and the infuriated Orozco went off to gather up his army and start a counter-revolution against this ingrate whom he had been supporting.

Díaz was truly alarmed at the development of affairs in the north. He tried to bribe Madero with the offer of important portfolios for himself and his generals. But Madero merely sent back the brief reply: "The resignation of the president and the vice-president, or war!"

Victoriano Huerta was now at the head of the Díaz army, and he advised the President not only to resign but to lose no time in leaving the country. As the Maderistas were closing in upon the capital, Díaz considered this very good advice; and so on May 25, 1911, he resigned from the presidency and left at



the field against him, Madero paid little attention. Félix Díaz seized Vera Cruz in October, 1912, and soon had a large following there; but when his army set out toward the capital, it met with defeat and Díaz was captured, imprisoned in San Juan de Ulúa and condemned to death. A rescue was attempted, and he was transferred to a prison in the capital for safe-keeping.

Being a graduate of the military college at Chapultepec, Díaz had many friends among the government troops and among military cadets. These troops now planned for his release, and the release of his friend, General Bernardo Reyes, who also was in prison in Mexico City. Their plot was so quietly and carefully laid that when they entered the capital on the night of February 8, 1913, they took possession of the city without a struggle, and quickly freed both Reyes and Díaz. At dawn the next morning Reyes, leading a company of cadets from the military college at Tlapam, stormed the National Palace. Reyes, at the head of his men, was killed instantly; for the Palace was heroically defended by General Villar, who, although seriously wounded, held out until Madero arrived from his castle at Chapultepec, accompanied by General Huerta.

Then began a period of which all of Mexico is well ashamed. It is known as *La decena trágica*, the Tragic Ten Days, and lasted from February 9 to 18.

Anarchy in its vilest form raged; murder was rampant; and the city reeked with blood. Civilians, not soldiers, were killed. Men, women, and children were slaughtered, each army seemingly striving to outdo the other in the number and atrociousness of its murders. Félix Díaz had about four thousand supporters; supposedly against him was Victoriano Huerta, at the head of the Madero forces. But Huerta had secretly agreed with Díaz to betray Madero and join the revolt. Until the time should be ripe to do this openly Huerta's army must ostensibly be fighting the Díaz troops; but the soldiers of both sides had their instructions, and it was non-combatants who fell during the tragic ten days of ceaseless fighting.

While this débâcle was at its height, the American Ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, tried repeatedly to bring about the resignation of Madero, believing that to be the most effective way to end the reign of terror that gripped the city. Thus he was accused of siding with the Huertistas, and was later recalled and his resignation accepted by President Wilson.

Gustavo Madero, the President's brother and the strongest man in his régime, was assassinated. Francisco I. Madero and his vice-president, Pino Suárez, were arrested and thrown into prison. Again and again Madero refused to resign; he refused to leave the highest office in the land open to a man whose hands even then were dripping with the blood of the

once for Paris, being escorted to Vera Cruz by General Huerta and a large body of troops.

Francisco de la Barra, one-time minister at Washington, became president *ad interim*; and on June 7 Francisco I. Madero swept into the capital, and was hailed with frenzied acclamations of joy from a half-million throats. His passage from the railway station to the National Palace was a triumphal procession. Not even the great Maximilian himself received such an enthusiastic ovation.

But a strange thing occurred on this June 7, and the superstitious believed it to be a presage of disaster. An earthquake, the most violent the city had ever known, rocked the capital time and again in the early morning, and it was followed by a cloudburst which turned into a steady downpour of rain that lasted the whole day long. The earthquake did much damage to the city and caused the utmost alarm, even a panic, among the superstitious Indians. They believed it to be their own gods speaking—for no amount of Virgin Mary worship can replace the Indians' awe and reverence for natural phenomena; many white men believed it to be a direct warning from Providence, this earthquake on the day when all the city was in gala dress to welcome Madero, with triumphal arches and flag- and flower-bedecked streets. However prophetic of disaster may have been this seeming protest of nature, certainly the entrance of Madero into the capital

marked the end of long years of progress and the beginning of an era unprecedented, even in the history of Mexico, for bloodshed, rapine, and anarchy.

On October 1, de la Barra's *ad interim* term ended, and he peacefully stepped aside, turning the presidency over to Madero. There was not yet any one party strong enough to oppose Madero. The only promise the new president remembered, of all the many that had rolled from his fluent tongue, was to put his own family into every office worth having. One big blunder he made, and it was to cost him dearly. He reduced the pay of General Huerta, the commanding general of the army, thus making an enemy where he could ill afford it.

General Zapata soon started a revolt in Morelos; in Chihuahua the insulted Orozco was actively fomenting a revolution; General Bernardo Reyes, whom Díaz at the last moment had hastily recalled from Europe but whom the Maderistas would not permit to land, had slipped into the country and now was in the north stirring up trouble against the man who had ousted Díaz. Reyes was captured by the Madero troops and thrust into prison in Mexico City, there to remain for more than a year until the rabble released him at the beginning of the Tragic Ten Days.

Madero, believing himself immensely popular, was wholly unconscious of all the plotting going on about him. Even when Félix Díaz, nephew of Porfirio, took

thousands of innocent slaughtered during the Tragic Ten Days. At last, however, his resignation was forced from him, and a similar resignation from Pino Suárez. Both were promised safe escort to Vera Cruz and permission to leave the country.

On Madero's resignation, Lascurain became president *pro tem*. He retained the office for twenty-six minutes. Pino Suárez had been president for four minutes. Lascurain's term lasted only long enough for him to name Huerta Minister of Gobernación and then to resign, so that Huerta might become constitutionally the president *ad interim* pending the next election.

And now came the question of disposing of Madero. To permit him to sail from Vera Cruz, as agreed, might mean his return through Coahuila, where the Maderos still were important and he had many friends; on the other hand, Huerta, in office, could ill afford to assassinate the ex-president outright. So the convenient plan of *ley fuga*, fugitive law, was decided upon. On the night of February 22, 1913, Madero and Pino Suárez were told that they were to be transferred from the Palace prison to the penitentiary. Somewhere on the way they were murdered, their guards claiming that the two prisoners attempted to escape and were shot in flight. Huerta expressed huge surprise when he heard of the assassination.

Félix Díaz, deciding that the Cuban climate would be more conducive to longevity, fled the country.

During the disturbance along the Rio Grande in 1912 President Taft had ordered a large force of American soldiers to concentrate at the Mexican border, to protect the laws of neutrality and the lives of American citizens. At the same time he sent warships to the Mexican ports, and Americans were warned to leave the country.

Now again, after the assassination of Madero, indignation in the United States was reaching a high pitch. Victoriano Huerta, in office, believed that an iron hand must be used, and with him an iron hand meant the murder of every enemy. Not only were American lives and property endangered during this débâcle, but those of other peoples as well; and European powers were demanding that either America step in and end the reign of murder in Mexico, or else lay aside the Monroe Doctrine and permit them to send their armies to clean up this blood-drenched country. It was a difficult situation which faced Woodrow Wilson, but he handled it with his usual farseeing diplomacy and his absolute fearlessness. In spite of pressure brought upon him from all sides, he refused persistently to recognize Huerta; he recalled Henry Lane Wilson; and he sent John Lind as his personal representative to confer with the Huerta Government.



There was at this time a new leader in the lime-light in Mexico. It was Venustiano Carranza, who, quaintly enough, called his followers *Constitutionalistas*. Under the "Plan of Guadalupe," his revolt against Huerta broke out in the north in March, 1913. Ten states immediately joined Carranza. His most capable officer was General Alvaro Obregón, who later was to make an able president and bring brief peace to strife-torn Mexico. In Chihuahua, General Francisco Villa—known also as Pancho Villa—was in the field against the Huerta troops, and his repeated and brilliant successes—due, it is claimed, to the strategic genius of one of his officers—soon made him the military leader of the Constitutionalists.

At the end of 1913, while Mexico was seething with hatred and reeking with blood, Wilson proclaimed his famous policy of "Watchful Waiting," and early in 1914 he lifted the embargo on the shipment of arms across the border, thus materially aiding Carranza's revolution against Victoriano Huerta.

Then on April 10, 1914, came the "Tampico Incident." American marines from the gunboat *Dolphin* landed on the wharf at Tampico to get gasoline. Their errand and their conduct were peaceable enough; but it was prohibited territory, and they were arrested by the Mexican under-officer in command of the troops placed there to guard the port. They were soon released by his superior, and an apology was offered.

But Admiral Mayo, in command of the fleet, demanded an official apology by a salute to the American flag. In this he was sustained by President Wilson. Huerta refused unless the salute should be returned by the Americans, gun for gun.

It was a small incident; but once Mayo had asked that the flag be saluted, American national honor demanded that the flag receive that salute, else would it have lost prestige not only in the eyes of Mexicans but of all other nations as well. Wilson obtained the authorization of Congress to use force, if necessary; and on April 21 American marines landed at Vera Cruz and took possession of the city, after brief but furious street fighting in which many lives were lost. In the harbor at Vera Cruz lay the German steamer *Ypiranga*, freighted with munitions for Huerta. The Americans saw to it that these were not landed at Vera Cruz; but they were later slipped in at another port.

Diplomatic relations were broken off between the two countries, and war seemed imminent. Wilson was determined that Victoriano Huerta must go. He had been given his opportunity to show that he was the man to bring order out of the chaos in Mexico; and, under him, the country had gone from bad to much worse. But even now the Carranza revolutionists were closing in upon the capital; and Wilson waited.

By July Huerta saw every hope gone. He had

squandered all the public funds; his army had deserted him outright; his life alone remained, and that would be worth little once the Constitutionalists got hold of him. After writing a verbose resignation, typical of the man, Huerta gathered up his personal belongings and what government treasure he could lay hands on, and fled, seeking refuge on a German steamer sailing for Europe. Two years later he was in Texas plotting a revolution to overthrow Carranza. He was arrested by the American Government for violating neutrality, but in prison he became so ill that he was released, and shortly afterward he died.

When Huerta resigned and fled from Mexico, Carbajal became provisional president; but the Constitutionalists, led by General Obregón, entered the city promptly, and were followed in a few days by Carranza himself. Thus on the tide of insurrection still another president rode into power. But Carranza disdained the title of president. Rather was he First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army, and as such he held the executive power. Being none too sure of the security of his office, in these days of revolutionary surprises, he revived the old *Ley Marcial* which had been Maximilian's death-warrant. Huertistas were declared traitors and outlaws, and as such were ordered shot on sight. This was the beginning of a period of utter lawlessness. Any one who had an enemy he wanted murdered or who wished to loot the homes

of the wealthy need only say they were Huertistas. Even stanch supporters of Carranza never knew at what moment they might be called Huertistas and shot down. The Constitutionals were ruling without a constitution, and Mexico again was in the grip of bloodshed and anarchy.

In Sonora a rebellion was gaining quick headway. Alvaro Obregón and Francisco Villa, as Carranza's two ablest military leaders, were sent to quell it. No two men could have been more widely different in their aspirations and in their methods: Obregón was an intellectual, determined and fair-minded leader; Villa an illiterate, unscrupulous and merciless bandit. Thus it is not strange that these two quarreled. The hot-headed Villa turned upon the Carranza government and proclaimed himself Dictator of the North, while Obregón hastened back to the capital to support the First Chief.

The Villistas were a formidable enemy, for they rapidly grew in numbers. As they swept south, and closed in upon Mexico City in November, 1914, they were joined by Zapata and his rabble horde from Morelos. Carranza felt it expedient to remove his capital to Puebla, from which it would be easy to retreat to Vera Cruz if necessary. So Villa entered Mexico unopposed, and held the city for his own candidate Gutiérrez. But Gutiérrez' rule was a stormy one, and in January he fled, being replaced by Garza.

Within ten days Garza, too, had resigned, and Villa himself had to flee; for the Carranza army, under General Obregón, had marched upon the capital to retake it.

Only a few weeks later Zapata's terrible hordes swooped upon Mexico, and Obregón had to retreat. Then began an orgy of crime, of looting and killing, of pillaging and burning, that lasted for four months, fighting in the meantime constantly going on between Carranza's forces under Obregón and the Villistas.

In the United States the demand for intervention was becoming insistent. Americans living near the Mexican border were suffering almost daily atrocities at the hands of Villa's outlaws; for the Villistas in the north were no more than a cut-throat band of brigands. They would dash across the border, loot, murder, burn, and be beyond the Rio Grande before they could be captured. It seemed impossible for the "Watchful Waiting" policy to continue.

Carranza had many utopian schemes for the salvation of Mexico, but he was no more than a weak old man, utterly unfit to cope with the conditions, which were now going from bad to worse, and still worse. A Pan-American Congress met at Niagara Falls to discuss a way to end the terrible frenzy of blood in Mexico. The most effective method seemed to be the prompt recognition by outside powers of some one man as president of the country; for Villa, Zapata and

Carranza all claimed the executive power. Thus in October, 1915, the United States officially recognized Carranza as the chief executive of the *de facto* government of Mexico.

This recognition of Carranza infuriated Villa; and far from bringing peace to the country, banditry and bloodshed broke out with renewed frenzy, and Carranza was wholly unable to stay it. Villa started an orgy of revenge against the United States for recognizing his rival. Early in 1916 eighteen Americans, going to reopen mines at Carranza's request, were taken from the train near Chihuahua and shot by Villa's bandits. On March 9, an army of Mexican brigands, led by General Villa himself, crossed the border and fell upon Columbus, New Mexico, killing several Americans, and looting and destroying.

No longer, then, could the American Government remain passive. It demanded that Villa be captured and punished. But Carranza not only was wholly unable to capture Villa; he was thoroughly indifferent as to whether the bandit were punished or not. So there remained nothing to be done but for the Americans themselves to find the leader of the outlaw band. A punitive expedition, under General Pershing, was sent into Mexico, with instructions to avoid the cities, not to molest the inhabitants, but to capture Pancho Villa or any of his brigands.

Across the endless deserts of Chihuahua they went,



under the blazing sun. Their motor trucks rolled up clouds of dust that parched their throats, the quivering heat-waves melted in the distance into a luring mirage of palm-bordered lakes and streams fringed with cottonwoods. Lizards and horned toads blinked at them and disappeared; disturbed rattlers uncoiled from their warm rocks, stared with curious eyes, then slipped off into the warmer sand. Many a long-eared rabbit supplemented the army rations. And so, day following day, the Americans went on.

But Villa was not to be found. He was at home in this strange region; he knew every foot of the sun-baked desert and every hidden nook in the rough red rocks that rise steeply out of the plain. Besides, he had many friends who were willing to hide him, and to keep him informed as to the movements of the Americans. Pershing's army was little molested until in June a detachment of negro cavalry was set upon by the Mexicans. Thirteen Americans were killed, and seventeen taken prisoner, but these were promptly released upon a strong demand from the American Government. But even while Pershing was searching Chihuahua for the arch villain, new raids were being made upon the border towns by Villa's bandits, and in Mexico itself all was a seething cauldron of revolution and fratricidal hatred.

Early in 1917 the American army was recalled.

One of Carranza's first acts, after his constitutional



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### THE WASH-TUB OF CHIHUAHUA

Ice-cold mountain water is forgotten in the joy of gossip when  
friend meets friend.



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### WILD BANANAS IN SINALOA

For all their ragged, storm-torn leaves, there is an exotic picturesqueness about the giant banana-plants.

election to the presidency on March 11, 1917, was to send the United States Government a note declaring Mexico's neutrality in the World War. This fooled no one. Mexico was strongly pro-German, but in her isolated position she dared not say so, yet she feared Germany far too much to join the Allies; for Carranza firmly believed that Germany would win, and then would come a day of reckoning.

This weakling attitude was the beginning of Carranza's unpopularity. He would have been far more respected had he allied himself openly with Germany, instead of declaring his "rigorous neutrality" while doing all in his power to further Germany's cause in the conflict. The famous Zimmermann note, disclosed in March, 1917, showed the German minister's plan for a joint invasion of the United States by Mexico and Japan, the Mexicans to be rewarded by the return to them of all that territory of the American Southwest they lost in the war of 1848.

The year 1917 was memorable for the adoption of a new Constitution, and in 1918 an attempt was made to enforce its most famous article, which stated that all subsoil deposits belonged to the government regardless of any purchase of land including these rights during the Díaz régime. Under this Article 27 the government imposed royalties on all petroleum and taxes on undeveloped oil lands. Foreign holders declared this to be an infringement of their acquired

rights, and the matter was taken up through proper official channels; but Carranza was as ill-advised in this as in most of his attitudes, and during his entire presidency his various oil decrees were under constant controversy and made him thoroughly unpopular with all foreigners and with the few business men with large interests remaining in topsyturvy Mexico.

Not once during the Carranza régime was there cessation of banditry and rebellion. That it did not assume larger proportions was due to the efficiency of General Obregón. But now Carranza quarreled with this man, his ablest military leader. As a revolutionary hero, Obregón had a loyal following; and already he had decided that Mexico needed a stronger man at the helm than Venustiano Carranza had proved himself to be.

Carranza, with all his fine schemes, his plans for improving the condition of the lower classes, for pacifying the country, made no effort toward carrying out his numerous beneficent decrees; so Mexico remained in a state of continuous lawlessness, and this increased as the presidential campaigning began, Americans and other foreigners being murdered during the general débâcle. It was understood that the man with the largest military force behind him would secure the presidency, and so many aspirants sprang up that it was a case of "dog eat dog" until only three remained in the field. The strongest of these was Alvaro Obre-



gón, who not only was thoroughly popular with the army and with Mexican business men generally, but had the moral support of foreign powers as well.

Obregón's stronghold, during these campaigning months, was the state of Sonora. The Yaqui Indians were behind him solidly. Among his staunchest supporters was General Adolfo de la Huerta, a native of Sonora, a man with high ideals and with a steadfastness of purpose. Carranza attempted to eliminate this hotbed of Obregonistas by placing a governor of his own selection in Sonora, as he had done, forcibly, in many other states. But he had not reckoned upon Obregón and his followers. In April, 1920, the "Republic of Sonora" was proclaimed, as wholly independent from Mexico until order should be restored in the mother republic and the rights of the state be respected. Obregón himself being in Mexico City, technically under arrest, the military command of the new republic was given to General Plutarco Elias Calles.

So quickly did this revolt spread that within three weeks eight states were openly Obregonista. A demand was made upon Carranza that he resign and enable Adolfo de la Huerta to assume supreme command until the "Plan of Agua Prieta" should be adopted by the new and Liberal Constitutionalist army. This Plan provided for the pacification of the country, the protection of citizens and foreigners, and the



enforcement of law and order, permitting the development of industries and commerce.

The Obregonistas, now fifty thousand strong, and composed of men who were determined to have peace—unlike the rabble of outlaws who had followed Villa and Zapata, bent on plunder—were closing in upon the capital, Obregón having joined them after escaping from Mexico in disguise. As the army came nearer and nearer, Carranza declared his intention to fight to the finish, never to resign; but all the while he was hastily making preparations to remove his capital to the at least temporary security of Vera Cruz. Twenty-one trains were called into service; for Carranza went not alone. With him were his troops, his Cabinet, his Supreme Court, carloads of official documents, and millions of treasure.

But he had waited too long. The revolutionists already were stationed along the route; the trains were set upon, the tracks torn up, the Carranza troops engaged in almost continuous fighting, until finally all hopes of reaching Vera Cruz had to be abandoned, and Carranza set off, with a small escort, for refuge in the mountains of the state of Puebla. And there, on the night of May 18, 1920, while asleep in a mountain shack, he was murdered.

Obregón, having entered Mexico City triumphantly on May 8, disclaimed all knowledge of this cowardly

deed; but Carranza's being out of the way certainly simplified matters for him.

There remained six months of Carranza's unexpired term, and Adolfo de la Huerta was made Substitute President to serve this period. His Secretary of War was General Plutarco Calles, who had handled the Obregón forces in Sonora so efficiently.

De la Huerta proved to be the friend of both the capitalists and the proletariat. Education, which during the Carranza régime had become an unknown quantity, even established schools being unattended and uncared for, now received a new impetus under de la Huerta. An efficient police system was organized to replace the thoroughly demoralized one Mexico had known during Carranza's term. Business was resumed on a more normal basis; and a new era seemed ready to smile upon Mexico. De la Huerta's protection of foreigners and his favorable attitude in the oil controversy arising from the famous Article 27, caused foreign nations to be hopeful at last of business stability and permanent and profitable trade relations between Mexico and other countries.

Obregón was elected in the fall of 1920 with little opposition, the Catholic Party making an effort for their candidate but being too weak to support him. The new president soon proved that he was as excellent an executive as he had been a military leader. Under his régime Mexico again knew peace; and for

three years there was uninterrupted progress and prosperity in the country after its decade of revolution. The various branches of the government were reorganized on a more efficient and sound basis; Mexico's tangled finances were straightened out; education was encouraged, and freedom of the press granted; and friendly relations with foreign powers were established. Obregón's policies, while often radical, were nevertheless constructive.

But there were two disturbing elements in his régime. These were the agrarian law and Bolshevism.

The agrarian law was excellent in theory, and all thinking men were agreed that land reform was sadly needed; but in actual practice the agrarian law was found to be too drastic for present-day Mexico, and its effect has proved little short of disastrous. Large areas, formerly richly productive, are now going to waste. In 1923 Mexico was compelled to import from the United States alone more than twelve million dollars' worth of food, all of it products that she so well could raise herself—sugar, corn, rice, bacon, and similar foods.

Obregón's stated policy was to establish a "Socialist Republic based on the doctrines and ideals of Jesus Christ," and to that end he worked conscientiously from the beginning. No man could have been more thoroughly sincere in his efforts for the betterment of the working classes and for the welfare of Mexico;

and it is doubtful whether any man could have ruled Mexico with the forcefulness and efficiency that Obregón showed.

By the summer of 1923 campaigning for the presidential election in July, 1924, was well under way. Under the Constitution, Obregón could not succeed himself, so he was eliminated as a candidate; but he wanted the Socialist Republic for which he had laid the foundation to be carried on, so he chose as his successor a vehement Socialist and Agrarian, General Plutarco Elias Calles, known as the "Tiger of Sonora," an able military leader, and a loyal supporter of Obregón. Calles was Secretary of the Interior in Obregón's Cabinet, and his candidacy was backed by the Labor Party, the Mexican Federation of Labor, the Agrarian Party and the Yucatan Socialists.

But there now sprang up a new party, declaring for free elections and a peaceful transfer of the presidency. They objected to having a retiring president impose his candidate upon the people merely because he had the army back of him. "If the Government does not follow frankly and loyally the tendencies which will give a free election, only violence can resolve the presidential succession," they declared, in July, 1923.

There was widespread belief that most of Mexico's troubles would be eliminated and the horizon cleared of its threatening war-clouds by the renewal of diplo-

matic relations with the United States; but when, in September, America formally recognized the Obregón Government, it caused scarcely a ripple of change in the political or economic situation. France and Belgium recognized Obregón; Great Britain refused to do so.

A month after the Labor Party had openly proclaimed Calles their presidential candidate, the opposition, the Cooperative Party, formally nominated Adolfo de la Huerta.

During his six months as Substitute President following Carranza, de la Huerta had shown a rare ability to weld together all parties. Thus out of the chaotic tangle of ten years of revolution he was able to shape Mexico into a peaceful and orderly country which he then turned over to Obregón. As Secretary of the Treasury in Obregón's Cabinet, he had been recognized as a practical, constructive man whose efforts went far toward furthering both business and civilian interests. And as the Conservative candidate for the presidency in 1924 he had a large and enthusiastic following all over Mexico.

But it was clear to the Conservatives that the popularity and proved ability of de la Huerta would count for little while the Radical candidate, Calles, had the powerful Mexican Federation of Labor working for him, and Obregón determined to make him president.

Stormy scenes in the Senate were daily taking place

between the Cooperatistas and the Labor members; and in December the final break came and the revolution was on. In midsummer Pancho Villa had been assassinated; and his large following in the north swung bodily over to de la Huerta. Many of Obregón's supporters, too, including some of his ablest military leaders, now joined the insurgents. And even the Labor Party was divided.

For the first few weeks of the revolution the de la Huerta forces swept everything before them, taking one important city after another and steadily closing in upon the capital. Then the United States stepped in, with direct aid to the Obregonistas by selling them war materials, by permitting them to cross United States territory, and by declaring an embargo on all commercial war shipments which might possibly reach the insurgents. This was a moral as well as a material blow to the de la Huerta cause.

On February 3, 1924, the revolutionists were compelled to evacuate Vera Cruz. This cut apart their forces on the east coast and was considered the beginning of the end. On February 9, one of the important battles of the revolution was fought at Ocotlán between fifteen thousand Federals and nine thousand insurgents. Under cover of a heavy artillery fire, the Federals crossed the Rio Lerma and stormed the enemy trenches. The rebels, outmatched in both numbers and equipment, put up a brave fight; but even-



tually they were driven back; and the following day they had to evacuate Guadalajara.

State after state then was retaken by the Federals, until de la Huerta controlled only the extreme south. Even though handicapped by lack of munitions, the spirit of the insurgents nevertheless was undaunted; and by the beginning of 1924 a separate revolution already was afoot to overthrow Calles should he be elected. Obregón is recognized as a strong and fearless man, a leader of the highest order, and his policies have been sane and constructive. Calles, elected in July, 1924, promises to carry on the splendid work begun by Obregón; but by many he is looked upon as an extreme radical whose policies may be too drastic. The defeated Liberal candidate, Angel Flores, has a large following; and the adherents of Adolfo de la Huerta are determined that Calles' presidency at least shall not be a peaceful one.

Intervention by the United States sooner or later is inevitable. American interests are far too much involved. Many believe that intervention will result in annexation; but intelligent Mexican leaders know that the United States wishes merely to help Mexicans save their own nation; and this they can do only by awakening in their compatriots a nationalistic spirit, a realization of the meaning of the Mexican Tri-color, and a pride in the country for which it stands.

When the bishop's carriage passes in the street,

thousands of peons drop upon their knees; they have been taught to respect it. To those same peons the Mexican flag means nothing, they know nothing of Mexico's geography or history; and they cannot be part of a nation of which they are wholly in ignorance. But if once a spirit of national patriotism, based on knowledge and understanding, could be instilled in the ten million or more now illiterate and apathetic, Mexico could yet take its proper place in the world of nations and become the truly great country that rightfully it should be.



## XII. "THE TREASURE-HOUSE OF THE WORLD"

MEXICO'S GREAT MINERAL WEALTH  
A "LOST" MINE NEVER FOUND  
THE WEALTH OF CHIHUAHUA  
THE FAMOUS MAGDALENA DISTRICT  
GUANAJUATO'S INEXHAUSTIBLE MINES  
PACHUCA, THE GATEWAY TO MILLIONS  
A MOUNTAIN OF IRON IN DURANGO  
OPALS, EMERALDS, TURQUOISE AND JADE  
THE PEARL FISHERIES OF CALIFORNIA  
THE TORTOISE FISHERIES OF YUCATAN  
OIL: THE MAGIC WORD OF MEXICO  
FORESTS WORTH BILLIONS  
THE "GREEN GOLD OF YUCATAN"  
PULQUE-PRODUCING MAGUEY  
QUICK FORTUNES IN STOCK-RAISING  
THE EXPORTATION OF BUTTERFLIES



## XII

### "THE TREASURE-HOUSE OF THE WORLD"

**W**HEN, more than a century ago, Baron von Humboldt called Mexico the treasure-house of the world, he was referring to her practically inexhaustible mineral wealth. Yet at that time he could have had scant idea of even her mineral resources, and none whatever of her truly fabulous wealth in other fields. When he visited Mexico early in the nineteenth century, her oil was almost unknown, many of her richest mines were yet to be discovered, the great cattle country of Chihuahua was an arid desert, barren, sunparched, the home of lizards, rat-tlers, and the ever-present horned toad.

When the Spanish conquistadores found themselves in possession of the land of the Aztecs they were far too greedy for gold and silver to be interested in much else; and so it was many years before the world knew of Mexico's vast resources in practically every known mineral. Little by little, other mines were opened—copper, lead, mercury, iron, zinc; marble was quarried, salt collected in great quantities, coal veins tapped in the north and onyx in the south.

Today Mexico leads the world in silver production;



it is second in copper; third in lead and zinc; and fifth in gold. Yet the supply of these minerals scarcely has been touched. Fabulous fortunes lie hidden away in those blue-peaked hills, waiting to be taken out. Thousands of rich mines remain yet to be discovered; still others are awaiting development.

Gold and silver, and many other minerals, are found in every state in the republic except Yucatan, Campeche and Tabasco. The entire Sierra Madre, from the American border to Guatemala, is a storehouse of such prodigious wealth that the human mind could not grasp the figures, could it be computed. In all of northern Mexico, including Baja California, gold, silver, copper and iron predominate. There is a tremendous production of zinc in the northeastern states. Central Mexico is veritably silver-lined; and Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas are fabulously rich in gold. This is but to state it roughly; for in every section at least a dozen valuable minerals are found.

The lovely Borda Gardens at Cuernavaca, one of the "show-places" of Mexico, were created by a Frenchman who made a quick fortune of forty million pesos in Zacatecas mines. One million of this he spent on his Cuernavaca grounds, and the result, even after two centuries, is a place of exquisite loveliness: bathing-pools and sunken-gardens, exotic flowers and beautiful trees, shady bamboo-walks and paths edged with coffee-trees aglow with brilliant red berries.



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### PACHUCA, THE GATEWAY TO MILLIONS

The mines here, worked long before the Conquest, continue  
to give of their inexhaustible riches.

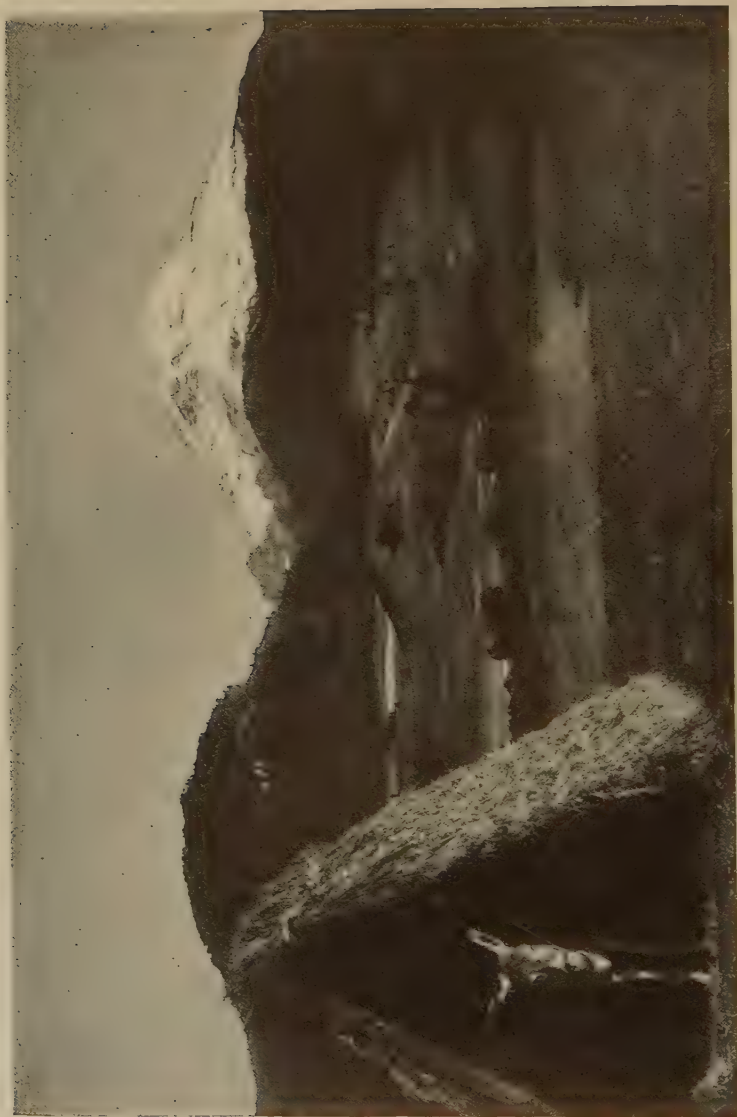


*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

FARMING AT THE FOOT OF POPO

Maximilian, as a botanist, found rare delight in these Gardens; and Carlota and her ladies bathed in the beautiful pools.

The output from Mexican mines is steadily on the increase; but there are still vast areas that are wholly untouched.

Many of the gold mines from which the treasures of the Aztecs came were so well hidden by the Indians when the unwelcome Spaniards poured into their mountains that they have never been found by white men. Even some of those known to the early Jesuits were carefully guarded by the good padres as their private treasure-chests and their location lost when the Jesuits were, with no warning, driven from the country in 1767. Some of these mines have been rediscovered; others are still hidden away in the hills.

One of the "lost" mines which has not yet been found is in the Parral District of Chihuahua. According to the story, an Indian was hunting in the mountains when a sudden and violent thunderstorm came up. As it grew in fury he became alarmed; but being a good Catholic Indian he prayed to the Virgin instead of to his ancient Sky-god. And the Virgin was duly appreciative. For with a terrific thunder-clap, a bolt of lightning splintered a tree with such violence that it was uprooted; and there, exposed to the Indian's eyes, was a bonanza in the way of a gold mine. The Indian kept his secret; but, grateful

to the Virgin of the Thunderbolt, he erected in the town of Parral a church to her honor—the *Iglesia de la Virgen del Rayo*, today one of the quaintest structures in Mexico. It was begun in 1690 and finished in 1710, and each week, regularly, the Indian brought gold from his hidden mine to pay the workmen.

The Spanish *comandante* waited until the completion of the church, and then, having had the hills searched in vain, he demanded that the Indian reveal the location of his secret mine. This the Indian refused to do. The Spaniard applied torture—in the brutal way so often practised by those Spanish gold-seekers; but the stoical Indian remained silent. The torture was increased, and became so unbearable that the Indian died under it, taking his secret with him. The hills were searched again and again; but apparently the Virgin had worked another miracle, for the mine never was found. Today the Indians point with pride to the Church of the Thunderbolt Virgin; they are proud of its having been founded by an Indian, and more proud of his stoical resistance to the white man's torture.

One of the Jesuit padres, mindful of the uncertainties of this earthly existence, wrote out a careful description of his secret and enormously rich mine, and stated that the opening of the tunnel could be seen from the door of the Mission. When the padre was spirited away to Spain, this record fell into greedy

hands; and time and again the hills in front of the Mission door were searched for miles; but no mine could be found. Every few years a new party would take up the search and comb the ground foot by foot. After a century or more, the neglected Mission began to crumble into ruins, and in 1905 one of the side walls fell, disclosing, almost in the rear of the building, a hidden, unsuspected door. From that point the mine was easily located, and produced a huge fortune for its discoverer.

The Parral District, in southern Chihuahua, is one of the famous mining centers of Mexico. Its Veta Colorada, a red mineral vein which extends for about ten miles, is a distinctive and noted feature. This region has produced enormous wealth in both gold and silver. The Spaniards, as far back as 1547, took out huge quantities of gold from the Santa Barbara mines. La Palmilla has produced a fabulous fortune in silver for its peon discoverer. The Minas Nuevas, still highly productive, were "New Mines" in 1645. The entire Parral District is dotted and honeycombed with mines of immense value, many of them historically famous, and all producing incredible fortunes. Most of them are worked by Americans.

The Almolyo District in Chihuahua ranks among the very rich districts, its supplies of gold, silver and copper seeming to be without end. The Santa Eulalia mine, worked by the Indians for untold years before



the arrival of the white men, has continued through all the centuries to give of its inexhaustible wealth.

The Magdalena District, in northern Sonora, is one of the most famous, one of the richest, and one of the oldest in Mexico. The bright-yellow metal, whose luster appealed to the Indians' love of color, was dug out of these hills to embellish the court of Montezuma long before the gold-mad Spaniards arrived. From the same mines, later, came enormous quantities of gold which freighted the Spanish galleons and lured pirates and buccaneers from the Seven Seas. Immense wealth in Magdalena gold found its way, in spite of eager highwaymen and rovers of the sea, to far-off Spain or to the Philippines. And today these same Magdalena mines are still giving of their exhaustless treasure.

In the Magdalena District, also, are rich silver mines. The *Planchas de Plata*—Silver Plates—was discovered nearly two centuries ago by a Yaqui Indian, who at once carried a huge chunk of silver to the nearest Jesuit padre. For a time the padre guarded the secret closely, while the mine gave of its wealth to the Church; but so enormous were the silver masses, and so plentiful, that the bonanza could not long remain hidden, and in 1739 the fabulous wealth of *Planchas de Plata* became famous throughout the mining world.

While the padres were looking with eagle eye after the interests of the Church, whenever a bonanza came

to light, the Viceroy was no less zealous in seeing that the lion's share came to him. In 1750, according to an old Jesuit record, a mine of flexible silver was discovered in Sonora, the metal being very soft and easily molded into any form; after being exposed to the air for a few hours it would harden into ordinary silver. As it was nearly a hundred per cent. pure, this was a great discovery, vouched for, says the good padre, not only by Spaniards but also by missionaries who actually handled the metal and molded images of the Virgin in it. News of this extraordinary find reached the Viceroy. The mine was immediately condemned until its status could be decided upon. If it were an ordinary silver vein in the hillside, the Crown would be entitled to only one-fifth of its output. If, however, it were hidden treasure, then all of it would belong to the Crown. No one doubted what the decision would be; but the Viceroy spent five days in supposedly weighing the problem before he declared it to be hidden treasure.

Often the Viceroy was more direct in his methods. The famous Doña María mine in the Huacal District was once owned and supervised by a Spanish widow who amassed a huge fortune which she stowed away in her house in an ever-growing pile of ingots. Contrary to human nature, the good Doña María at last was satisfied with the amount of her wealth, and decided to go back to Spain to enjoy it rather than re-

main there, in the uncertain wilds, accumulating more. Forty mules were loaded with her gold and silver ingots, and with several retainers she set off for the capital, there to ask for royal escort to the coast. The highways were infested with bandits, and Doña María's wealth was a source of constant worry to her; but when she arrived in the capital and reported to the Viceroy with her forty mules heavily laden with gold and silver, her worries suddenly ceased. For the good lady's soul flew off to parts unknown, her body was secretly disposed of, and her treasure went to gladden the Viceroy's coffers.

Guanajuato has come to be almost synonymous with fabulous wealth in gold and silver mines; for the supply of these minerals in the mountains of the state seems to be exhaustless. The Veta Madre alone has produced billions of pesos of silver. For four centuries the white men have been taking out untold quantities of treasure; and long before the Spaniards arrived the Indians were working the mines to pay tribute to the Aztecs. Immense deposits of gold and silver are still stored away in these mountains, and the state ranks as one of the richest districts in Mexico. Its capital, Guanajuato, is honeycombed with mines from end to end. The city clings to the mountainside, having spread upward from the little mining-camp established by the Spaniards in 1545. The narrow, crooked streets wind up and down the hillside, being so steep

in places that they have been laid with broad stone steps, like certain of the streets in Naples. Houses, churches, and mining-shafts intermingle, in quaint incongruity. The wild setting of Guanajuato makes it one of the most picturesque towns in the republic. Its main approach is through a deep and narrow gorge whose name alone, the Cañon de Marfil—Marble Canyon—is descriptive of its rugged beauty.

One of the greatest mining centers of Mexico, and older even than Guanajuato, is Pachuca, the capital of the state of Hidalgo. The entire state is immensely rich in silver, gold, copper, iron, and a multitude of other minerals. The most noted and extensive of its mines are the Real del Monte, which made a multimillionaire of their original Mexican owner; lost ten million pesos for the English company which sought to make them give up their wealth; then, again in Mexican hands, produced within a few years a hundred million pesos in ore. There is still a steady output from these Real del Monte mines.

Copper is mined extensively in many of the states, but especially in Baja California and Sonora. One of the greatest copper districts in Mexico, and in the world, is the Cananea, in northern Sonora. It already has produced colossal fortunes; yet the fabulous wealth of the Cananea Range in copper and iron scarcely has been touched.

In Baja California there is an entire mountain of

iron. In Durango there is an iron mountain which is even more remarkable, its estimated value being five thousand million dollars; but this is only from surface indications, as no one knows how deep into the earth the iron extends. The mountain, Cerro del Mercado, is nearly a mile long, a quarter of a mile wide, and rises seven hundred feet above the surrounding plain. Durango has vast deposits of gold, silver, and other minerals as well, and produces exquisite rubies and opals.

Querétaro is the great opal state, the hills being rich in opal-bearing rock. Zacatecas produces fine turquoises. Entire mountains of onyx are found in Puebla and Oaxaca. Guerrero is noted for its topazes. Jade, emeralds, amethysts, garnets, are scattered about this remarkable country, which produces every precious stone except diamonds; and even these may yet be discovered.

Some of the finest pearls in the world have come from the Gulf of California. For centuries before the Spaniards arrived in Mexico the natives were engaged in pearl-fishing in these waters; for in some remote time they discovered that the pearl was a jewel of great beauty. When the early Spanish padres made their difficult way through Sinaloa and Sonora and came upon the gulf coast, they marveled at the size and beauty of the pearls the natives were wearing. The source of these proved to be the oyster-

banks off the eastern coast of Baja California. And when word of this reached the capital there was a stampede of adventurers, not unlike a gold stampede, for this new field of wealth. The supply seems to be everlasting. Through all the centuries pearl-fishing has been going on along this coast, and still today La Paz is one of the great pearl centers of the world.

When modern methods are used, a picturesque fleet of a half-dozen or more schooners go out by starlight, to be on the banks at daybreak; the men, in diving-suits, drop to the bottom, and in a veritable fairyland of seaweed forests and bright-colored fishes, they pick out the pearl-oyster from the myriads of shells that line the bottom of the sea. Pearl-oysters are no longer found in beds but are scattered here and there over a wide area and lie mingled with a great variety of other shellfish. Thus the diver's time under water must be spent in searching for them as well as in gathering them into his wire basket.

The pearls usually are white, but they are found in almost every color, and some are of immense value. One, found near La Paz, of an exquisite rose color, was sold for \$50,000. Many of the most beautiful pearls among the royal jewels of every country in Europe came from the Gulf of California. Mexico's pearl industry today is estimated at about three million dollars annually.

Much of the pearl-fishing is done by the natives,



clothed only in a belt to which their basket is attached. They can remain below water for a minute or more before they must come to the surface for air. The Gulf of California is infested with sharks, and a native diver will never go down without first having a shark-charmer mutter his incantations over him. The shark-charmers follow the Indians from place to place and gain a good livelihood by their magic processes of frightening off the voracious fishes.

On the coasts of Yucatan, Campeche and Tabasco, tortoise fisheries form an important and profitable industry, and give employment to large numbers of natives. In the days of the Maya Empire the tortoise was a sacred creature, greatly venerated; and that spirit of worship has come down through the centuries to the present-day Indian, who, it is claimed, mutters a prayer of adoration to every tortoise he handles—an apology, perhaps, for commercializing its valuable tortoiseshell, large quantities of which are exported. The coasts of Guerrero and Oaxaca also have their tortoise fisheries.

To many people industrial Mexico means but one thing today—oil. For her oil-fields have leaped into the limelight with such astounding productions and such seemingly inexhaustible supplies that they bid fair to rank foremost among Mexico's greatest wealth-producers.

When the Spaniards arrived in 1519 they found the

Indians burning petroleum, mixed with pungent herbs, as an incense to their gods. During the centuries following, efforts were made to coax out of the earth her abundance of *chapopote*, as the natives called it; and more and more oil was obtained for domestic consumption. For the past fifty years or so it has been exported. But not until 1901 did the real Oil Era begin in Mexico. Since then the output has been more than a billion barrels. There are fields of enormous productiveness, especially in Tamaulipas, Vera Cruz, and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The production of Mexican oil in 1901 was about ten thousand barrels; in 1921 it was nearly two hundred million barrels. And yet, in this industry also, the field scarcely has been touched. The oil region in Mexico is estimated as covering an area of nearly four million acres; only fifteen thousand acres have been exploited. Even at present, however, this country is the second largest producer of petroleum in the world—the United States ranking first.

In the very heart of the great oil districts of Tamaulipas and Vera Cruz is "the most American city outside of the United States"—Tampico—the greatest oil center in the world, and one of Mexico's most important ports. At its door are ocean-going steamers, oil-tankers, barges, vessels from all parts of the world; for not only is oil exported through this busy gateway, but many other Mexican products as well—silver,

copper, lead and zinc, hides and skins, sarsaparilla, vanilla, honey, vegetable fibers. The wharves edging the Pánuco River bustle with constant activity.

With all its Yankee enterprise, however, its commercial aspect, its busy oil-shipping life, there is about Tampico a charm that is wholly Mexican. This is only partly due to the delightful location of the city. In the centuries past, the thatched huts of a little Indian village, called by the natives Tampico, "Place of Dogs," clustered at the edge of the Pánuco River. Only along the bank was there space for a hut, for the interior was dense jungle—forests of giant close-crowded trees, choking vines and matted undergrowth. It was an ideal location, however: the river swarmed with fish, the lagoons with wild-fowl, and the forests with game; and so the Indians who came to trade lingered, and the village grew until it pushed the jungle back.

When the Spaniards arrived, Tampico was a thriving settlement, and they were quick to appreciate its importance as a port. The Huastecas were easily subjugated and assimilated; Spanish churches and houses were erected; and the colony thrived in spite of frequent raids by pirate ships from the Spanish Main. As the city grew in importance the jungle gave way, slowly and resistingly at first, and then more rapidly. After the opening of the oil-fields, houses sprang up almost overnight; so that now Tampico

spreads itself from the shore of the Pánuco backward along a delightful peninsula, flanked on one side by a winding canal and the broad Laguna del Carpintero, and on the other by the Tamesi River and the island-dotted Laguna del Chairel.

Far off to the east lies the blue of the Gulf; to the west the haze-blue of forested hills, while beyond the hills, cutting the skyline, are the peaks of the Sierra Madre. The Pánuco River, rising in the mountains, tumbles tumultuously over the steep escarpments, then winds down from the hills and wanders lazily out to the sea. At Tampico its broad surface is covered with oil, making it brightly iridescent by day and dark and gloomy at night. Across the river from Tampico the shallow Laguna del Pueblo Viejo attracts myriads of wild-fowl; and the surrounding meadows are gay with flowers and jewel-tinted birds.

Because of the topography of Mexico, ranging from the sunbaked tropical lowlands to the region of perpetual snow, there is scarcely any known plant or tree that will not flourish. There are immense fortunes in Mexico's mahogany, rosewood, ebony, cedar, and other forests. In out-of-the-way places many of these valuable trees are being felled and burned—lacking transportation facilities—to make way for fruit or cattle ranches. The forests of the south are rich in both cabinet and dye woods. Rubber trees, camphor and coffee grow wild in many parts of the republic. Cocoa-

nut-palms, which revel in the salt-sea air, run inland from all the coasts.

Small fruit ranches are scattered from Chihuahua to Oaxaca, peaches, apricots, oranges, grapefruit, bananas, pineapples, guavas, berries, melons, and scores of other fruits flourishing as if by magic, and even in the most arid spots the prickly-pear cactus will furnish its "tuna" which the natives find both delectable and nutritious. This is the nopal-cactus, or *tenuch*, the plant upon which the eagle perched to show the wandering Aztecs where their capital city of Tenochtitlán should be built. The fruit is greatly relished by the Indians, and forms one of their staple foods. It has the unique property of being always cool and refreshing, no matter how hot the sun that pours down upon it. The fruit of the pitahaya-cactus also is sought by the natives; for it ripens at the height of the dry season, and is cooling, sweet, and delicious. But the Indian must be alert indeed to get the fruit before the hungry little bluejay has dined upon it.

The barrel-cactus, with its reservoir of clear, bitter-sweet water, has saved many a desert traveler from thirst-craze. Every species of cactus has its reservoir either above or below ground; but it is well for the thirsty wanderer across arid wastes to remember that the juice of some cacti is deadly poisonous, and that of others is a powerful narcotic.

Mexico is known as the home of the cactus; and the

natives have learned to make some use of practically every species that grows. The tall, fluted spikes of the organ-cactus make an ideal roadside fence. Not only are they quaint and beautiful, extending for miles along the road, but their soft gray-green color is a restful change from the sun-glare on white sand, and, more utilitarian perhaps, they are so covered with needle-sharp spines that even the small cottontail hesitates before squeezing through. For a defensive hedge, the nopal-cactus cannot be excelled; and many of the native huts are all but surrounded with it, its tangled and prickly branches giving pause to any intruder. Also, it is a convenience to be able to pick one's tuna-fruit breakfast off one's fence.

The most famous of all of Mexico's cacti is the *Agave*. One species, cultivated for its fiber, is known as the sisal-cactus; another, widely cultivated for its sap, is usually called the maguey.

In Yucatan immense plantations of *Agave rigida* or *elongata* are cultivated, the stiff, dagger-like leaves producing the henequén or sisal-hemp of commerce. Because these plantations yield enormous fortunes for their owners, the wealth-producing, gray-green plant is called the "Green Gold of Yucatan." The annual export of henequén from this state amounts to about fifty million pesos. The fiber-producing *Agave* is largely cultivated also in Campeche, Tabasco, Chiapas



and Oaxaca, but on a smaller scale than in Yucatan, and of an inferior quality.

The most noted plant in Mexico, surpassing even the humble maize, is the *Agave americana*, the maguey, known in the United States as the century-plant because of a belief that it blooms only once in a hundred years. From its sap the Mexicans make their national drink, *pulque* (pronounced pool'kay). In four states the cultivation of maguey is the leading industry. The plant flourishes best on the plateau, in sandy, semi-arid soil; and vast plantations run up and down the rolling hills or extend far out over the plain, in long, straight, silver-green rows. The maguey requires little attention during the six or eight years it takes to mature, and so the Mexican peon finds its cultivation entirely to his liking. From the center of the stiff and dagger-like leaves a tall spike springs up, and just before it produces its two or three thousand blossoms the knife of the peon digs out the heart of the plant, leaving only an outer rim of leaves with a bowl-like cavity in the center. Into this the rich sap, intended by the plant to nourish its flowers, pours, one might believe, in anguish; for it has struggled for six or eight years through the adversities of broiling sun and arid soil, storing up its precious life-fluid to give to its flower, and now it may never know the beauty of myriads of lemon-yellow blossoms and the joy of consummation.



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### GATHERING THE SAP OF THE MAGUEY

In the primitive way that has been used for centuries the peon  
collects the sap and fills the bag on his back.



*Copyright, Burton Holmes*

### A PULQUE-SHOP BY THE WAYSIDE

The pig-skins are filled with maguey-sap, ready to be changed to pulque.

One plant produces about ten gallons of sap, called *aguamiel*, honey-water. And then, having given of its all, the luckless maguey dies. The peons today collect the sap in the same primitive fashion employed by the Aztecs. One end of a long gourd, called an *acocote*, is inserted in the heart of the maguey, the other end in the peon's mouth, and by suction the sap is drawn into the gourd, and from there deposited in a pigskin or sheepskin bag carried usually on the peon's back. As soon as the *aguamiel* ferments, which may be in a day or two, it is *pulque*, whitish in color, sickly sweet-and-sour in taste, objectionable in odor, and intoxicating according to its age. Pulque is so cheap that even the poorest can buy it, and so it is consumed in enormous quantities, and causes a great deal of misery, poverty and crime.

*Mescal* is a highly intoxicating liquor distilled from the leaves and the roots of the maguey. *Tequila* is similarly distilled from a smaller species of the same plant. Both of these liquors find great favor in Mexico; but they cannot compare in popularity with the cheap, the extraordinarily obnoxious, and the usually filthy, pulque. The Mexicans regard this, their national drink, so highly that they have a saying:

Sabe que es pulque—  
Licor divino?  
Lo beben los ángeles  
En vez de vino!

Do you know pulque—  
That liquor divine?  
The angels all drink it  
In preference to wine!

Not only does the maguey furnish this "licor divino," however. The uses of its fibrous leaves are multitudinous. They are edged with sharp thorns, and by pulling one of these off carefully without breaking it from the attached long fiber, the native has an excellent needle already threaded. Twine, rope, and coarse cloth are made from these fibers; a stout paper from the pulp—many of the early Aztec and other records were pictured on maguey-parchment. The thick, water-proof leaves are used to thatch the native huts, their midribs forming natural rain-gutters; mats, baskets, and other articles are fashioned from strips of the long leaves.

The maguey figures in many Aztec and Toltec legends, and played an important part in Aztec religion. Huitzilopochtli, the War-god, was often called "Snake of the Maguey." According to one legend, Huitzilopochtli led the Aztecs for six hundred years in their wanderings; and even after he died and became a god they kept his bones and his skull and carried them on their march. But one day a devil appeared in the skull, and would not be driven out. He caused such havoc in the Aztec ranks that at last the high priest threw away the skull among some maguey-plants that grew by the wayside. This insulted the devil, and he jumped out and went crawling off in the form of a snake. The Aztecs were awed, for of all creatures the snake was most revered by them.



They begged the devil to come back, promising to carry the skull always with them. This pleased the snake, and he immediately became a hare, that he might skip along beside them. The Aztecs then named him Mexitli, "Hare of the Maguey," which is another name for Huitzilopochtli, the War-god, and is the word from which "Mexico" came. The hare was always associated by the Aztecs with this plant, although they believed that the spirit of the maguey took the form of a hummingbird; for the hummingbird often suspends its delicate nest from the stiff, well-spiked leaves and is seen rising from the plant like a veritable djinn of the maguey.

Cotton, sugar, and tobacco have been staple products of Mexico from unknown prehistoric times. But in spite of immense plantations, there is not enough of these commodities raised to supply the home demand. During the year 1923 more than eleven million pesos' worth of cotton and cotton manufactures were imported from the United States; three million pounds of sugar, and one million pounds of tobacco. Coffee is exported in large quantities, some of the finest coffee in the world coming from Colima. Mexico sent to the United States alone thirty-nine million pounds of coffee in 1923. The trees grow wild on many of the hillsides, and where they are cultivated they require little attention until the season for picking the berries arrives. The coffee-pickers are a picturesque, ragged



bunch. The entire family, including the babies and dogs, and often the chickens and the one family pig, go from place to place, carrying with them all their household belongings, picking coffee for a few centavos a day, their "homes" consisting of a quickly thatched canope to keep out the hot sun of midday, or a hole burrowed into jungled undergrowth.

Chicle is exported in large quantites, especially to the United States. Istle, a vegetable-fiber somewhat similar to sisal, is becoming an important export. Cacao, vanilla, indigo, cereals, peas and beans, especially *frijoles* or brown beans, are among the valuable crops that thrive in the rich soil and magic climate of Mexico. Maize, the staple food of the Indian, is grown everywhere. In many places, where the land is well irrigated, corn grows to the height of fifteen to twenty feet and bears from five to seven well-developed ears to the stalk. Failure of a maize crop causes much suffering to the poorer classes. They know nothing about conservation, but raise each season just enough for their immediate needs.

From the time the Spaniards introduced horses and cattle into the country, stock-raising has been an important industry. Even the poorest peons have their hogs—sharp-nosed, long-legged, tan-colored creatures that need no care. They live in the same reed hut, dirt-floored and banana-thatched, that shelters also the chickens and the children, and root their own suste-

nance out of the ground. On the plains of Chihuahua and Coahuila, and in the uplands of Vera Cruz and elsewhere, there are immense cattle ranches, the stock thriving on the rich grass that grows wherever there is a bit of moisture. Enormous and immediate fortunes are made in this industry.

Goat-farming, too, is immensely profitable; the hides alone bring a large return—more than a million dollars' worth of them were exported to the United States in 1923—while goat-flesh, "Mexican mutton," is in such demand that the supply is never adequate. Many ranches are stocked with from ten to fifty thousand goats. Vast herds wander across the plains of Chihuahua, or scamper up and down the steep slopes of the Sierra Madre. Sheep-raising, also, is one of the important and wealth-producing industries.

A unique new industry to which the Agricultural Department of the Mexican Government is devoting attention is the commercializing of its butterflies. Even as Mexico is the home of brilliant-plumaged and multi-colored birds, and of exquisite, bright-hued flowers, so also it has an immense variety of butterflies, some of them very beautiful. Already American importers are getting valuable shipments of butterflies from Mexico; but the industry is still in its infancy, and promises to be an interesting as well as a profitable one.

According to an official statement, American invest-

ments in Mexico amount to nearly one and a half billion dollars. A large part of this is in railroads, mining and oil; but stock-raising, grain, fruit-growing, rubber, henequén, timber and similar industries also are financed and to a large extent carried on by Americans. Great Britain has an investment of about ninety million pounds sterling; and Germany, France, Spain and other countries have large interests there.

Mexico's wealth in raw materials is unlimited. Few countries in the world are so rich. Above ground, below ground, and in her seas are fabulous fortunes. And when the tangled politics of the country are straightened out and a greater feeling of business confidence prevails, those riches will be enabled to flow in a continuous and abundant stream, and then indeed will Mexico take her place among the nations, and become in reality the treasure-house of the world

### XIII. THE LAND OF INTEREST AND CHARM

BEAUTIFUL MEXICO CITY  
THE FLOATING-GARDENS AT XOCHIMILCO  
INDIAN WORSHIP AT GUADALUPE  
THE STORY OF SACRO MONTE  
THE CANNIBAL TRIBE ON TIBURÓN ISLAND  
THE YAQUIS OF THE NORTH  
STRANGE CUSTOMS OF THE PIMA INDIANS  
THE TARAHUMARE CAVE-DWELLERS  
THE HIKULI-GOD OF THE HUICHOLS  
THE FEAST OF PINOLE  
IN THE MOUNTAINS OF NAYARIT  
TARASCAN DREAMERS  
IN SUNNY OAXACA  
THE ORIENTAL TEHUANAS  
THE MAYAS OF TODAY  
THE LAND OF CONSTANT CHARM



### XIII

#### THE LAND OF INTEREST AND CHARM

**A**NCIENT Mexico City was the golden capital of the Aztecs, sumptuous, imperial, and beautiful. Modern Mexico, retaining all of its ancient charm and loveliness, blending them with the thorough up-to-dateness of its present busy streets, is unlike any other city in America.

It is a beautiful capital. Its broad boulevards are flanked with superb trees, and back of those are palatial residences, glimpsed through the green of shrubbery and the color-splotches of many flowers. The business streets, lined on both sides with modern bank or office buildings, teem with activity. Of the seven hundred thousand or more population of the capital, about twenty thousand are Americans. The leading hotels and restaurants are American managed, and are supplied with up-to-the-minute conveniences. There are beautiful public buildings; large and modern stores; an excellent street-car system. As an indication of the intellectual side of the better-class Mexican, in the busy Avenida Cinco de Mayo, in the very heart of the business district, there is an average of two bookstores to every block. These stores are constantly busy; and



their windows display works on music, painting, history, science, world events, with only a small space devoted to the latest fiction by Mexican, Spanish, French, English and American writers.

The beautiful Alameda, in the heart of Mexico City, is one of the loveliest parks in the world. Its graceful fountains and artistic statues add the beauty of man's art to the grand old trees which nature keeps eternally lovely. Throughout the city are many smaller parks, many lovely monuments, many pretty fountains placed in unsuspected and delightful corners.

But even in this wholly modern city, with its big business houses and its up-to-date conveniences, there is an atmosphere entirely Old Mexican, born of the ghosts of the past. For seven hundred years, human life has gone on here, with all its pettiness and its greatness—religions have been destroyed, wars waged, kings crowned and murdered, humans bartered, feasts and famines celebrated or bewailed—and the glamour of these seven centuries of human events still permeates the atmosphere and grips and charms the visitor to this wide-awake capital.

A more tangible source of the charm that one feels in Mexico City is the Indian venders who bring their wares to the capital to dispose of. Protected from the sun by broad-brimmed sombreros, they sit motionless on the curbstone, their merchandise spread out on the pavement beside them. Oranges are a favorite

ware. Arranged in neat rows on the pavement, or placed in little pyramids of three or four, they flaunt their gold-bright color in self-advertisement to the passersby. Scrawny apples, also, form little pyramids on the *pavimento*; and tasteless peanuts; but the gold-yellow oranges are the most showy, and usually are as delicious as they look.

In the flower-market the native women are in their element; for the color, the fragrance, and the beauty of the blossoms appeal to the poetic instinct that is part of the inheritance of every Indian. The flower-market in the capital is a place of charm and rare loveliness in spite of the hideous "set pieces" which predominate and are in demand for innumerable religious ceremonies. It is at Xochimilco, however, a noted suburb of Mexico City, that the flower-market is seen at its best.

At Xochimilco are the famous floating-gardens which date back to pre-Cortés days. The Aztec emperors demanded the choicest in vegetables, the most delicious in fruits, and the most exquisite in flowers; and the Indians of the "chinampas," or floating-gardens, vied with one another in producing the finest and the most delectable for the royal table. The descendants of those same Indians putter about the floating-gardens today, raising a few vegetables, much sugar-cane—the stalk of which is sold in short lengths and chewed as a great delicacy—the all-important maize, and great

quantities of flowers, from the tiny violet and lily-of-the-valley to exquisite peonies and roses.

On the canals that wind through the gardens, edged with wild reeds and tall straight poplars, native gondolas, flower-bedecked, glide along to the music of serenading guitars. On the shores are occasional native huts, built of reeds and thatched with leaves; or a flower-patch, where a bronze-cheeked, black-eyed little maiden of eight or ten, standing shoulder-deep in peonies, gathering them for market—scarlet blossoms against jet-black hair—will timidly throw a flower into the boat, no smile on her lips, but her eyes dancing with fun and with the joy of living in a place so beautiful.

Quite a different side of the native is seen at Guadalupe, another of the many interesting suburbs of the capital. To Guadalupe the Indians go to worship at the shrine of the *Santísima Virgen* who appeared so miraculously to a humble Indian in 1531. A perpetual twilight exists inside the really beautiful church at Guadalupe. Outside, long rows of candle-sellers have their open-air stalls up and down the streets. As a worshiper arrives he purchases a candle, enters the church, lights his taper and then drops on his knees on the cold stone floor, holding his candle aloft while he prays to the miraculous painting hanging in its solid-gold frame up beyond the altar. With two or three hundred kneeling figures, close-packed, each



*Photo., Hugo Brehme*

### THE CANALS AT XOCHIMILCO

Native gondolas, flower-bedecked, glide along to the music of serenading guitars.



*Copyright, Ewing Galloway*

### THE FAMOUS FLOATING-GARDENS

Descendants of the Aztecs now cultivate these same gardens  
that furnished delicacies for the table of Montezuma.



holding one or more lighted candles flaring through the semi-darkness, the service at the church in Guadalupe is a spectacular sight never to be forgotten. The sublime faith of these many lowly Indians permeates the atmosphere; and, however much one may be an unbeliever, there is a sense of holiness in the very air of the church that is poignantly gripping.

Tiny children kneel beside their parents, their fat little fists holding tightly to lighted tapers while their wide eyes stare with wonder and delight at the myriads of flames flickering all about them. A new-born baby, scantily clad, is laid on the cold stone floor while the mother holds aloft a taper in each hand and mutters a prayer to the Virgin: "Here is my little one. If he is to grow up good and brave, give him always thy divine protection, *Santísima Virgen*. But if he is to be wicked . . . take him from me now!" Strong indeed must be the faith of a young mother thus to renounce perhaps her first-born. If the baby dies, there is no mourning; for has not the Virgin of Guadalupe seen into the future and taken the child, even as the mother prayed?

Either before or after the ceremony in the church the worshipers go to *El Pocito*, the miraculous spring that gushed forth at the feet of the Virgin when she took the roses Juan Diego had gathered on the hill-top. The Indians drink this water with fanatic belief in its curative powers and its ability to keep away



evil; many bring bottles and jars to fill with the potent liquid, to carry home or to send to friends in far-off corners of Mexico. In the well-like enclosure the water bubbles up with astonishing force, and is supposed to have a miraculous origin and no outlet. A bit of mundane iron water-pipe is in plain view, down in the well; but only the hardened skeptic can see it.

Early in the year, at the Feast of St. Anthony, the strange "Blessing of the Animals" occurs in many suburbs of Mexico City. This is a gala occasion indeed for the color-loving Indians, and they vie with one another to see which can make their animals the most gaudy. Plentiful paint-pots and vivid ribbons and paper-streamers are brought into play; and the result is amazing. Crimson sheep, pink goats, blue pigs and bright-green cows mill about the churchyard among orange turkeys and flaming-red geese, while old hens, ribbon-bedecked and squawking, rest on the backs of purple horses with tinfoiled legs—all waiting for the priests to appear and sprinkle them with the magic holy water.

To the Indian worshiper the shrine at Sacro Monte, Amecameca, is almost, but not quite, as sacred as that of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*.

Four hundred years ago P. Fray Martín de Valencia, one of the twelve apostles who arrived in New Spain in 1524, worked among the natives at Amecameca. Much of his time was passed in prayer, alone

in a cave at the top of a nearby hill. Often days and nights were spent there, in solitude, with only the birds and the trees and God. So greatly was Fray Martín loved by the Indians that when he died they buried him in this cave, now famous throughout Mexico as *Sacro Monte*. Soon he was revered as a saint, and then almost as a god. And as the years and the centuries passed the place became so sacred that today hundreds of thousands of Indians make pilgrimages every year to this shrine, to pray to the saint and to a remarkable image of the *Cristo*.

This image of Christ, although life-size, weighs only three pounds. Many believe that it was made by the good friar himself; while others ascribe to it a miraculous origin. According to the Indians—and they claim that the story has been handed down from father to son through all the generations—shortly after the Spaniards arrived in Mexico a mule-train freighted with gold and other Aztec treasure was on its way to the coast. But one mule, carrying a heavy box, strayed; it was tracked and found at last in this cave; but the box had become remarkably light, and when it was opened, instead of the gold it had originally held was this image of Christ. Certainly the image is very old. It probably is made of the pith of the maize-stalk; and is colored in a way that makes it more showy than beautiful. But, whatever its origin and however gaudy its appearance, the image, reclining

in its heavy-glass case, is regarded by the Indians with fanatic veneration.

The Sacred Hill is about four hundred feet high, and the cave of the good friar is now protected by a chapel built about it. Stone stairs cut into the hillside lead steeply up to the top; and many of the devotees ascend these steps on their well-padded knees, murmuring, as they go, rhythmic, semi-audible prayers. Other Indians stand for hours in an ecstatic trance, communing with the spirit of the good Fray Martín—dead these four hundred years. Unwashed garments, articles of clothing torn from the body, human hair pulled out of the head in exalted frenzy, lie spread out on the trees and bushes where the spirit of the saint in passing will pause to give them blessing.

On the Wednesday preceding Easter the Indians enact a crude Passion Play on Sacro Monte; it involves torchlight processions at night, and then the whole scene becomes weird, awe-inspiring, and extraordinarily spectacular.

The Indians of Mexico are a source of unending interest to the visitor from outside. And no small part of their charm lies in the great difference between the many tribes.

In the upper reaches of the Gulf of California, off the coast of Sonora, the Island of Tiburón—Spanish for Shark—raises itself out of the water in four hun-

dred square miles of bleak hills and barren deserts. On three sides of the island the Gulf curves about the shore; on the fourth side the shark-infested strait known as Boca del Infierno—Mouth of Hell—separates Tiburón from the mainland. And along the mainland, covering many hundred square miles, there is nothing but burning desert—hills and plains of restless sand, sprinkled with mesquite and cacti and blanketed with rolling heat-waves. On the barren Island of Tiburón and the more barren Encinas Desert of the mainland live the Seri Indians, the most savage tribe in Mexico, known to be cannibals until a few years ago, and none can say that they are not cannibals even yet.

Time and again the Mexican Government has hunted down the Seris when word reached the mainland that a white man had been partaken of at a Tiburón banquet; and so there are but comparatively few of this tribe remaining. Today they keep mostly to their island, except in cactus-picking time, when their primitive boats remove the entire tribe to the Encinas Desert to feed on the succulent and delicious fruits of the nopal, the pitahaya, and the saguaro. These cacti, and bean-flour from the mesquite, form a delectable and necessary change from their habitual diet of shellfish, birds, and stolen burros—not to mention possible unfortunate Papago Indians, the long-time enemies of the Seris.

These savages of Tiburón Island are much dreaded in western Sonora. When they tire of their fish and bird diet—and there are countless scrawny dogs to be fed as well as the humans—the Seri braves cross to the mainland and make quick raids upon the nearest hacienda, carrying off burros, chickens or stray goats. Not only are the men superbly built and very powerful physically, but they fight with poisoned arrows and care nothing for human life; and so they meet with no resistance in lonely haciendas.

The Seris do not welcome strangers to their island. They keep to themselves, and wish the rest of the world to do the same. In days past, more than one venturesome American filled their cannibal's pot. While they are supposed to have overcome this taste for human flesh, the cautious visitor, unless he is well guarded, will be careful not to antagonize them.

Their life, even today, is primitive in the extreme. The Seri man wears only a loincloth of pelican-skin; the woman a crudely fashioned skirt of the same material. Their houses, scarcely worthy of the name, are formed of branches of mesquite stuck in the ground, bent over at the top, and weighted down with turtle-shells. The turtle is, to be sure, a sacred creature, one of their gods; but that does not keep the Seri from eating its flesh and utilizing its shell. Their gods are the things they see every day—the turtle,

the pelican, the sun and moon, while the shark is a bad god, as is also the venomous scorpion.

Beyond the desert that runs inland from the coast of Sonora are the Yaqui Indians. A few wild bands still live in the remote fastnesses of the mountains and are as primitive and savage as were their forefathers in the days when an Indian's existence depended upon his ability to fight. Most of the Yaquis, however, have come under the influence of the white man, and their old-time customs have been quaintly adapted to fit in with modern needs. Early in October, each year, a great religious festivity is held in Magdalena in honor of the patron saint of the city, San Francisco Xavier. To both the Yaquis and the Papagos this is a long-anticipated and joyous event. Days ahead of the great day, October 8, they start out from their homes for the pilgrimage through the mountains and across the deserts of Sonora, to take part in the gala celebration and to deposit their money with the image of the saint, in return for certain blessings, past and future.

The Yaquis are industrious and very dependable. American mine owners prefer them as laborers to the foreigners who come to work in the mines. In their native costumes they are very picturesque. They have that splendid physique that is common to most of the Indians of Mexico, and that unmistakable look that comes from living in the open spaces.



In the mountains of southern Sonora are the Pimas, who have adopted many of the customs of the Yaquis to the north, of the Tarahumares to the east, and of the Huichols to the south. The poorer Pimas live in caves in the mountains. The men spend their time in hunting black and grizzly bears, mountain lions, leopards, and other wild animals that roam through the forests; and the women look after the household duties that a cave-dwelling requires—fresh clay must be had to make jars to replenish the hillside shelves; cloth must be woven out of cactus-fiber or garments fashioned from the bit of cloth that has been received, with a bottle or two of mescal, in exchange for a handsome bear or leopard skin; maize must be ground on the primitive metate; wild beans must be gathered, dried, and pounded into flour. When the women have finished their work they sit in the sun on the hillside and comb their long black locks with a pine-cone.

Among the Pima Indians, as among all the other tribes—excepting only the Seris, perhaps—there are many who are well educated and who live in beautiful homes, with all the conveniences of present-day civilization. Both their sons and their daughters are educated in New York, in Paris, in Madrid. Many leading politicians and business and professional men in Mexico today are full-blooded Indians, as are also many of the beautiful and cultured society leaders in

Mexico City. It is only the poorer classes who remain illiterate and cling to their primitive customs.

While many of the Pimas continue to live in caves in the mountains, it is the Tarahumare Indians who are the real cave-dwellers of today. They are one of the most interesting tribes in Mexico. For centuries they have lived in the mountains of Chihuahua. Their traditions state that when they came down from somewhere in the north they found in these mountains a tribe which they quickly annihilated; and as fast as they killed the enemy they stacked them away, side by side and one on top of the other, in the nearest cave, then sealed up the cave with adobe. Some of these caves have actually been discovered, the niter in the rock preserving the bodies to a certain extent through all the centuries.

The northern sierras are honeycombed with caves, many of them extensive and very beautiful in formation; and the Tarahumares continue to live here in much the same fashion that their ancestors did during the untold ages of the past. Where nature has failed to provide chambers in a cavern otherwise suitable, the Tarahumares partition off rooms by building adobe walls or walls of sundried brick. The sheep and the goats live in the cave with the family and have a pen partitioned off for them by a low wall. A wall of stones is placed in front of the cavern, to prevent the sheep and the children from tumbling down the hill-

side; and invariably an adobe platform is placed either in front or to one side of the cave. Here the family's private religious dances are performed—just as they believe the full moon when she has a ring around her is dancing on her private patio in the sky. Some of the Tarahumares have emerged from this cave-dwelling stage and are now living in houses constructed like the most ancient of those found in Mesa Verde—of low stone walls and a cone-shaped roof formed of timbers that slope to the ground.

The Tarahumare Indians have many strange customs. Their medicine-men cut their hair, to get new thoughts with the new growth, and then tie their heads up tightly in bandages to keep their thoughts from escaping. The hunters stalk their prey, as did the American Indians of long ago, dressed in the skins of wild animals. A party of Indians, in their hunting disguise and looking like a peaceful herd of antelope, will wait silently beside a stream until the thirsty animals come to drink; and not only antelope but bears and other wild creatures approach unafraid, and are shot with the primitive but deadly arrow. Deer are captured by a snare fastened to a sapling bent to the ground; once the deer's foot is caught, his struggles release the sapling and he springs on high where, with three feet pawing the air, he is helpless to release the fourth. Blackbirds are caught by threading corn on a piece of slender but strong pitahaya-

fiber. The greedy bird swallows the corn and finds himself hopelessly attached to a nearby bush or corn-stalk.

The Tarahumares are still nomadic, and in the winter they leave their cave-homes to the plentiful scorpions and tarantulas and climb down the mountains to the wild barrancas. Here, sheltered from the cold winds of the mountain-top, they wander at leisure up and down the gorge, building their campfire where fancy dictates, hunting, fishing, or merely lounging away the months until springtime comes and it is time to return to the heights to plant their maize-fields and tobacco-patches.

Always the Tarahumare will have a storehouse, either as a room partitioned off in his cave-of-the-many-uses, or as a separate adobe hut. In this he stores maize, beans, chili, squashes, tobacco, and the sacred and all-important *hikuli*.

Hikuli (*Lophophora williamsii*) is known to the Texan as "dry whisky" or "white mule," and to the Mexican as *peyote*. Its common name in America is mescal-button. But to all of the Indian tribes of the sierras it is hikuli. It is a small, turnip-shaped and spineless cactus, its round, flat-topped head appearing like a white button sewed onto the yellow sand with the pink threads that are its flowers. It is a strong intoxicant and narcotic, producing a state of delirious

exhilaration similar to the combined effects of whisky, opium and hashish.

To the Tarahumare the hikuli is a god—not as great as Father Sun, Mother Moon or the Morning-star, but ranking next to these three. It is fed copal incense and held in the highest veneration. On very rare occasions of great religious importance liquor containing it is drunk, or it is chewed in the dry state. It produces immediate exaltation, fantastic color visions, delirious ecstasy; but its reaction is a state of utmost depression and exhaustion. Being a god, the hikuli is capable of performing any sort of miracle. A little of it carried by a hunter, the Tarahumare believes, will keep ferocious animals from harming him, and make deer run toward him instead of away from him. It is a sure protection against witchcraft.

Paganism and Christianity are quaintly mingled in Tarahumare religion. The medicine-men are all-powerful; and when they happen to be not to the liking of the people they become sorcerers and witches. Various herbs and invigorating spruce-steam baths are used by the medicine-men to cure the ill, but the most potent remedies are the native beer—brewed from maize and called *tesvino*—and the tail of a blue-gray fox.

All plants have souls, the Tarahumare believes, else they could not live. Also, they have a language of their own and can talk to one another.

Inseparable from all their religious rites is rhythmic dancing. The Rain Dance is perhaps the most picturesque, when, following upon a drought, the entire tribe gathers and all day and all night dances to the rhythmic beat of the deerskin drum and the noise of the many pebbles in the medicine-man's rattle. Their Harvest Dance in the fall is performed on maize-stalks, laid in even rows, the dancers winding in and out among piles of golden corn-ears, dried bean-pods, and yellow squashes.

The Tarahumares are the greatest runners in the world: they think nothing of running a hundred miles without stopping. Their games from babyhood involve running in some form, a favorite game being to kick along a small wooden ball as they run. The greatest pastime for the men is a race in which the best runners of the entire tribe take part. Two leaders are chosen and the men range equally on two sides. The sacred hikuli is now brought into play, for no man who has a bit of this magic plant secreted about him can be defeated; also the dried head of an eagle or a crow secreted under the girdle is very potent. Great rivalry exists between the two sides, and underhanded methods are not despised; human bones, for instance, are known to produce fatigue, so they are hidden along the rival's way, and as the runner passes near them the spirit in the dead bones reaches out and grasps some of the vitality of the living. On the



other hand, the blood of the turtle and the bat, stirred together, dried, then mixed with tobacco and smoked, will produce supernatural strength, for the turtle and the bat are demi-gods.

Medicine-men are indispensable on a long race, which lasts for two or three days, for their loud rattles of deer-hoofs keep the runners awake, and the crushed herbs they throw into the air give them strength—at least the strength of faith. When night comes the Tarahumare maidens run beside their brothers, carrying pine torches to light the way, and the race then becomes a weird and spectacular sight, the lights flaring here and there, like giant will-o'-the-wisps, through the dark pine forests.

All Indian tribes who live in the deep woods weave their legends about the wild animals, the birds, and the insects; for these are the things that they know. The Tarahumare legends are rich in animal stories. One tale shows that the fox is not the most clever of creatures, as he is always considered in other folklore. The Gray Fox and the Mountain Lion, according to the Tarahumares, one day had a dispute as to which could catch a rabbit first.

"You are too big and clumsy," said the Fox. "You move too slowly."

"And you are too stupid," said the Lion. "You think too slowly."

So they decided to settle it then and there; and that

their chances might be even they sat down back to back, the Lion facing north and the Fox south. They kept very quiet, and after a long time the Lion spied a rabbit coming toward them. He glanced around quickly, and saw the Fox was fast asleep.

"Little Rabbit," he whispered, "go to the hole in that oak-tree, but don't go in the hole. Slip behind the tree, then hurry off through the woods. If you don't, I'll pounce upon you and eat you up!"

Then he woke the Fox.

"I saw a rabbit," he said, "but it ran into that hole in the oak-tree, and I am too big to follow it. So you will catch it after all, for you can easily get into the hole."

The Fox spun round in time to see the rabbit's tail just disappearing, and he made one leap and was inside the oak-tree. Then the Mountain Lion built a fire in front of the hole, planning to have roast fox for his supper; but the Gray Fox rushed out, through the fire, and scampered off into the forest. He scorched his feet, however; and ever since then foxes have walked very lightly.

Another of the stories told to little Tarahumare children in Mexico is strangely similar to the Wolf and Turtle story which Eskimo children in Alaska love and hear over and over again. In the Tarahumare version a Deer and a Toad began to argue as to which could see the sun first in the morning. A Crow

was asked to be the judge. The Deer watched toward the east, while the Toad watched the west. But the Toad looked all the way under the earth and saw the sun while it was still in bed. He watched it until it began to get up; and then the Crow said that he had won, although the sun had not yet peeped up in the east. The Deer claimed that this was not fair; and after much dispute the Toad agreed to settle it by running a race with the Deer.

"Tomorrow," said the Toad; "for today I have hurt my eyes in looking at the sun and I cannot see the way."

Then the Toad hopped off, and calling together all of his brother Toads he placed them at intervals along the route, while he himself went and hid behind the pine-tree that was to be their goal. And the next day, even though the fleet Deer ran its very swiftest, always ahead of it was a green Toad, hopping along clumsily, disappearing, and suddenly appearing again. And there at the pine-tree the Toad stood waiting for the Deer to come up.

The Deer did not like this, for he had believed that he was the fleetest creature in the forest. So again he claimed that it was not fair; and after a great deal of dispute the Toad agreed to settle it by a fight with the Deer to see which was the stronger.

"Tomorrow," said the Toad; "for today I have

hopped so far that my legs are tired and I cannot stand up."

Then the Toad slipped off and called together an army of Gadflies.

"If you will sting the Deer," he said, "I will promise never to eat another Gadfly!"

And the next day when the Deer and the Toad stood ready for the fight, the Gadflies swooped down out of the pine-tree where they had been hiding and stung the Deer so that he turned and ran off through the forest, and never came back again.

The customs of the Tepehuanes are similar to those of the Tarahumares, except that this tribe lives in log-cabins instead of caves, and their religious rites are kept very secret, some being so closely guarded that they are unknown outside of the tribe. When there is only a slice of moon in the sky the Tepehuanes believe a great frog is trying to swallow it, and the medicine-men beat their drums furiously to frighten it off.

The Cora Indians also are similar to the Tarahumares and are their neighbors. They have a strange symbol which they call a god's-eye. This painted on an arrow will make it fleet and sure; painted on a baby boy it will make him grow strong and brave; on a baby girl, beautiful and industrious; painted on a stone and sprinkled with salt it will cause, in due time,

a spring to gush forth; in fact, there is nothing which this magic god's-eye cannot accomplish.

Like the Tarahumare, the Cora prays for long life; and, living outdoors, in the invigorating pine forests of the mountains, this prayer is usually answered. When, however, a Cora does die, his body is placed in the open and covered with ashes for one night. His family then knows that his soul has taken the form of whatever wild animal's track is found in the ashes the next morning. If, perchance, no animal should get a whiff of the corpse and come snooping round, then there is no track, and the Coras believe the poor man's soul is doomed to eternal darkness, for it can never know the joys of wandering the Sierra Madre forests in the form of a bear, a mountain lion, a fox, a coyote.

In the wildest of the mountains of Durango and Sinaloa are the Huichol Indians. Having little use for the white man or his methods, this tribe lives in the most inaccessible fastnesses, in the deepest barrancas, on the most precipitous hillsides. In the days of the Franciscan friars, five churches somehow were established among the Huichols; but today they are used for pagan worship, those saints of whom the Catholics left visible images being accepted as heathen gods and worshiped alongside the Huichol idols. Especially is their Rain Dance performed inside these old churches, so that the saints may participate, and be

so pleased that they will intercede with the Sky-gods for rain.

The shaman, or medicine-man, of the Huichols always wears feathers from the eagle or the hawk; for these birds fly high and see everything, and so their feathers enable the medicine-man to see and know all that goes on in the sky, on the earth, and underground. The skies are full of gods; and when the Huichols pray they must face alternately the four points of the compass, for if they should face only the east, the North-gods, and the West, and the South, might be offended.

In their legends both animals and plants are all gods. But especially venerated are the Echinocactus, which produces wild ecstasy when chewed, and the sacred hikuli, or mescal-button. The hikuli does not grow in their mountain retreats; long pilgrimages must be made to procure it from the desert of Chihuahua. These pilgrimages, covering days, have come to be the greatest religious rite of the Huichols. The finest young men of the tribe are chosen—and they are physically splendid indeed, for all Huichol men are superbly built and extraordinarily good-looking. A great Feast of the Squashes is held, and after the feasting and wild rejoicing, the young pilgrims are sent off on their mission to bring back the hikuli. They are accompanied by one or more medicine-men; and they carry with them copal to burn as incense to the little cactus while



murmuring a prayer of adoration before uprooting it.

Tenderly the pilgrims carry the cacti back, on their many days' journey, offering always copal incense to the hikuli before partaking of food themselves; and when they arrive, with these living gods, the tribe gives itself over to its greatest religious festivity of the year, beginning with an ox barbecue, merging into wild and hilarious dancing as bits of the roasted hikuli are chewed, and ending in a doped stupor in which only the medicine-man remains enough alive to shake his ceaseless rattle adorned with its bit of hikuli. No longer is there rhythm to his music, however; it has turned to syncopated crashes, and ends at last when he, too, succumbs to the powerful hikuli and tumbles over like a log.

"Huichol," the name of the tribe, is the Spanish corruption for their own word meaning "Healer." About every fifth man is a shaman, or medicine-man; and undoubtedly they have a good knowledge of the medicinal plants which grow so abundantly in their mountains. Yet, except for hikuli, few herbs are used in their healing, for they have found that the most potent remedy is the tail of a gray rabbit. It is passed three times across the patient's closed eyes, and suspended for three days from a string around his neck. By that time his faith has cured him. Should he die, it is because the Evil Gods want him and are working



#### A CACTUS-FENCE IN OAXACA

In the moonlight these silver-green fences are unutterably weird,  
like ghost-fingers rising out of the bright-white sand.



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INDIANS OF THE SOUTHLAND

a stronger magic than that of the rabbit's tail. To assure the safety of his soul he is buried in a cave—Evil Gods cannot enter caves—his feet toward the east, and hikuli is placed on each eyelid; for the soul, the Huichols believe, is directly back of the eyes, and must be ushered into eternity by the Hikuli-god.

The better-class Huichols live in comfortable stone houses, and have always a god-house somewhere near. Usually it is a circular stone building, its one opening facing the east. In it are placed those things which are apt to please the gods.

The Huichols are deeply religious, and have a delightfully poetic imagination. The east to them is the Earth-goddess, and the flowers of spring are her skirt; her color is red. The west is white, like white clouds. The south is blue, and owns all the seeds. The north is spotted, and the name means "Rain and Fog hanging in the Trees and Grass." Young Mother Eagle, the Sun's mother, holds the world in her talons and guards everything; the stars are her dress. The Huichols have a great love for rhythm; even their ordinary language has a rhythmic swing that is pleasing.

They are very industrious, their plentiful maize and bean fields being cultivated between patches of sugarcane or bananas, or fields of cotton or indigo. Tobacco is given its place, and squashes grow among the maize. Sheep are raised, but for their wool only, as they are

sacred animals and may not be killed. The women dye the wool and weave exquisite blankets and *sarapes*. This tribe is more widely noted, however, for the striking bags which the men wear suspended from their girdles. Always there is one, in which tobacco and the flint and steel for striking fire are carried. Often there are two or three of these bags hanging from the shoulder. They are woven of cotton or wool, are original and attractive in design and striking in color.

Both men and women wear many necklaces, being weighted down with them, and their wrists and their bare brown ankles are heavy with circlets of beads.

An interesting belief of the Huichols, which dates back for centuries, is that their medicine-men, when they are wearing feathers from the royal eagle, can hear the movements of the sun, they can listen to the changing tones of the sunrays as they increase or diminish their length. Leading scientists in Paris have only recently "discovered" that the sunrays have sound, and are now working toward making "the music of the spheres" an audible reality.

The Tepecanos, south of the Huichols, have clung to many of their primitive tribal customs, and to the strange religious rites of their forefathers. They worship not only animals and plants but even rocks that have unusual formations; for these, they believe, are their ancient ancestors who chose to remain, even



in the form of stone, on the earth they knew rather than trust themselves to the uncertainties of the Underworld.

They believe that in the very long ago, even before the Tepecanos came, and when the earth was peopled with giants, a great Feast of Maize was held in order to give thanks to the Rain-god for the abundant crops. But the giants forgot to praise the Earth-goddess, and this so angered her that she took all the corn on earth and hid it inside of a mountain. Soon the giants began to starve, and they called upon the Rain-god to help them. He promptly sent a deluge and washed a hole into the mountain until it reached to the corn. But it was only a small hole, and even the giant babies could not get into it. So all the giants were turned into red and black ants, and they crawled into the mountain and brought the maize out. The Rain-god was then so busy making the maize sprout and grow that he forgot to turn the little creatures back into giants again; and so to this day the Tepecano country is overrun with ants.

Hikuli and maize are equally important in the religion of this tribe. A venerable old Indian, always known as Grandfather Fire, leads the young hikuli-seekers on their long pilgrimage for the little cacti. Each man wears always one or more tails of the gray squirrel hanging from the brim of his broad, flat hat,



and Grandfather Fire carries copal and anise-seed to burn as incense to the Hikuli-god.

Shortly after the return of the hikuli pilgrims the Tepecanos hold their greatest religious festivity of the year. This is the Feast of Pinole, which occurs on January 5. Pinole is a staple food with many of the Indians. Its most common form is in cakes made from dried maize ground on the metate. Often the sweet flour of the mesquite-bean is added. For the Feast of Pinole, held in honor of the Maize-god, a bit of roasted hikuli and anise-seed are added to the corn while it is being ground, and water, drop by drop, is poured upon the metate. The fermented liquid resulting from this mixture is a powerful stimulant, and by frequent sips of it the Pinole dancers can keep their feet in joyous if tangled movement for many hours while the medicine-men rattle their gourds, beat upon their primitive drums, or make weird music on flutes fashioned from reeds and covered with rattlesnake-skin. In the center of the dancing circle, ears of corn are heaped in a great golden pile; and into the midst of this the dancers tumble, one by one, when the Maize-god at last has received of their utmost efforts and the Hikuli-god claims them.

An early Jesuit padre wrote of the Sierra de Nayarit: "It is so wild and frightful to behold that its ruggedness, even more than the arrows of its warlike inhabitants, took away the courage of the conquerors,

because not only the ridges and valleys appear inaccessible, but the extended range of towering mountain peaks confuses even the eye."

And these mountains, in spite of their vast mineral wealth, have been little invaded by white men even today. No railroads run near them; the highways, where there are any, are mere mule-paths, or narrow Indian trails that drop down the steep hills or cross canyons, at a dizzying height, on no more than a rotting tree-trunk. Remnants of several scattered tribes still wander over these bare brown mountains of Zacatecas and Nayarit, or cultivate their maize and tobacco in the deep barrancas. Of them all the Tepic Indians are the most proud, and the most loyal to their race. They have been the leaders in nearly every native rebellion which has attempted to reestablish Indian supremacy in Mexico.

Hidden away in these little-frequented mountains of Nayarit are many caves where idols are worshiped in rites of which no white man may ever be a witness. Great-grandfather Deertail, the Morning-star, is the greatest divinity, ranking above even Father Sun and the Rain-god; for of what use are the sun and rain if the morning-star does not usher in another day?

Long before the Conquest the state of Michoacan was one of the most densely populated regions in the country. Consequently there are now innumerable ancient ruins—temples built of lava-rock, crude forti-

fications, burial mounds, caves with rock-carvings—and the Tarascan Indians of today have many traditions about these ruins, and about the days when their ancestors first came to the land and found already there a race of giants. According to the Tarascan legends, this was shortly after the Great Flood. Thirteen giants were instructed by the Rain-god to build a boat and take into it every kind of animal and bird. When the flood came, they sailed three times round the world; and then the waters began to subside. First they sent out from their ark a vulture; but it remained to feast on the dead giants. Then they sent out a hummingbird, and it returned with a flower in its beak. This legend, based on the flood story common to most Indian tribes, was no doubt colored by the Bible teachings of the early friars.

Another of the Tarascan traditions claims that their earliest ancestors originated in the mountains of Michoacan and were the first men on earth. The Sun, as the chief Sky-god, and the Earth-goddess had a dispute as to which was the greater. The Earth-goddess controlled everything that grew in the ground; yet nothing could grow without air and sun and rain from the Sky-god. They decided to settle their dispute by seeing which could create the most interesting creature. The Sun blended the speed of Lightning with the color of the Rainbow and made a hummingbird. The Earth-goddess then went into her deepest

cavern in the Michoacan mountains and from the stalagmites created ten Tarascans, the first men and women on earth. They came out of the cave, one riding on a coyote and nine on giant turtles; and to show their supremacy over the Sun-god's greatest creation, one carried the hummingbird in his hand, while another carried the Sun itself! This legend is quaintly pictured on many of the ancient maguey-parchment records of the Tarascans of long ago.

Today the Tarascan Indians are the most fervent of Catholics; but their worship of the Virgin and the saints is delightfully mingled with their pagan worship of Our Father Sun and Our Mother Moon and with the many superstitions that still exist among them. They live in deadly fear of the Evil Eye. The only protection against this terrible witchcraft is something red, for red blurs the sorcerer's sight. Thus always a red feather from the woodpecker is worn in the hair, or a red string is tied about the wrist or ankle; a bit of red cloth flutters over the door of the hut, and a piece is tied to a maize-stalk in the corn-patch. As a further protection for their crops, and a talisman that will bring an abundance of maize, an idol of one of their gods is buried in each field.

The rattlesnake is held in great reverence, and is never killed; for his rattle shows that he is a medicine-man of the gods. The huge and dangerous boa, however, is an evil god and much dreaded. The boa, the

deadly scorpion and the tarantula, all too plentiful in several parts of the state, kill many Tarascan children every year. When a mother hears an owl hoot, she knows her child is to die.

The Tarascans live in so beautiful a country, it is small wonder that they are poetic dreamers. The very names of their cities are poetry. *Uruapán* means "Where flowers are blooming"; *Tzintzuntzan*, "Where hummingbirds fly." At sunset the Tarascan stands in ecstasy and in prayer and watches his god, Our Father Sun, depart for the night. After the sun goes down, the water-sprites come forth. Besides its lakes—Chapala, Pátzcuaro, and innumerable smaller ones tucked away in the mountains—Michoacan has many rivers that tumble down from the heights, often in glorious cascades; and these the Tarascan worships even as he worships the sunset. The most superb of the falls, and so the most venerated, are those of Tzaráracua, about six miles from Uruapán.

*Tzaráracua* means "Where water falls in many sprays." From out of a dark and deep cavern a roaring river comes rushing tumultuously, to dash over the precipice in a gigantic leap of ninety feet into the bowl it has worn for itself at the bottom. Here it tumbles with a thunderous noise, leaps on high till the sunlight catches its spray and forms myriads of interlocked rainbows, then drops, swirls gaily, and goes rollicking off down a rugged and beautiful gorge. The

main fall, of tremendous volume, is grand and awe-inspiring, and the white man as well as the Indian can find much in it to worship. The greatest beauty of Tzaráracua, however, lies in the many tiny streams which separate from the main river and tumble over the cliff in exquisite cascades of their own, some of them mere threads of water, their spray falling like jewels on ferns and leaning plants that reach out to catch the lovely shower. In the ancient days, before the vandal white man came, the Tarascans brought their choicest treasures and cast them into these falls, as an offering to the mighty Water-god.

In the southern part of Mexico there are still immense areas where the white man is almost, if not wholly, unknown. And it is here that the most interesting of the natives live, in the same primitive fashion in which their ancestors lived two or more thousand years ago. The Sierra Madre del Sur crosses Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas, and in its unfrequented forests wild-boar, leopards, tigers, black bear, and deer are still plentiful; on the uplands the maguey and the nopal-cactus grow wild; along the coast are coconut-palms; and in the jungles wild bananas, sugar-cane and rice grow side by side with the breadfruit-tree. The native needs no more than these for an abundance of food, clothing and shelter. But from time immemorial maize has been the staple food; and even in the thickest jungle a patch will be cleared, the ground



plowed with a forked stick, the corn planted, and somewhere in the field a pole will be placed and a god-bag tied to it to make the grain grow. These bags are exquisitely woven of cactus-fiber and colored in many bright hues. Only one is tied to a pole and it contains a god—a small green stone, often jade—who protects the grain from marauding birds and at the same time works magic upon it so that the ripened maize will bring good luck to all who eat it.

In Oaxaca the mountains run down sharply to a broad and treeless plain, a rolling sea of cream-colored sand checkered by the green of cultivated fields. In Chiapas the plain merges into dense jungle, giant forests of cabinet and dye woods, where it receives the moisture from Tabasco's many rivers. Tabasco is a network of lagoons, swamps and watercourses, with crowded jungle, almost impenetrable vegetation, everywhere between. Campeche, part of the Yucatan Peninsula, has much the same formation as Yucatan—in the north vast rolling plains, sunscorched but extremely fertile; in the south, dense jungle forests. And in each of these states the natives merely have adapted themselves to their environment, making little effort to change nature's plan to suit their own needs.

Of the Indians of the south who have come into contact with the white man's civilization the most interesting are the Zapotecs of Oaxaca. From the days of Maya-Quiché supremacy the Zapotecs have been

skilled artisans, and this inheritance is shown today in their exquisite baskets, in their wool *sarapes*, woven on primitive looms and gorgeously dyed, and in their delicate filigree-work in 24-karat gold.

In the Oaxacan cities children of the present generation are compelled to attend school. This is an advantage most of their parents did not have; and it is not unusual to see a youngster from seven to ten reading his schoolbooks to an eagerly attentive adult audience, or patiently teaching his father to read and write. The lesson finished, the father then recounts to the delighted youngster some of the Zapotec or Mixtec legends handed down through the generations. Many of these legends are about the Maya gods of other days. Many are about the animals and even the plants the little Indian child knows.

A unique industry of the Zapotecs and their neighboring tribes is the gathering of cochineal. Oaxaca, it is claimed, was the original home of these tiny insects which thrive on leaves of the cacti. With a wide-mouthed bag and a brush, the Indians go out in the dry season and gather their crop. The insects are killed by immersion into boiling water or by quick baking, are thoroughly dried in the sun, and then produce a luscious red dye that cannot be equaled in beauty or lasting quality by the aniline dyes of modern commerce.

Few regions in Mexico are so beautiful as the Isth-

mus of Tehuantepec. It has the bizarre beauty of tropical jungles: glorious masses of color and seas of green; trees dripping rare orchids, flaming magenta morning-glories, brilliant-plumaged birds and gay butterflies. And the city of Tehuantepec, although in the state of Oaxaca, is as if it were in another world. Its native inhabitants, the Tehuanas, claim to be directly descended from the ancient Zapotec builders of Mitla; but in both customs and costume they are widely different from the Zapotecs of today, and from all other Indian tribes of Mexico. The Tehuanas are far more Oriental than they are Mexican.

The young women are strangely beautiful, with a beauty of the Far East which is accentuated by their elaborate Malay costume—an Eton-jacket effect of garish cloth edged with gold braid, a plentiful supply of bare brown skin showing all round; a very full skirt tucked about the hips and edged at the bottom with some startling-bright color; sandals beneath bare brown feet; and a gay kerchief of vivid red, yellow or purple wound turban-fashion about the head. On gala occasions the most picturesque article of their costume, an enormous lace ruff, three or four feet in diameter, worn more like a picture-frame than a head-dress, gives to the Tehuana beauty a distinctly alluring appearance; and of this the coquettish black-eyed maiden is fully aware.

From Tehuantepec to the Pacific port of Salina

Cruz the hills are bleak and bare; for winds from the Pacific are constantly blowing, and before a plant has a chance to gain roothold a driving sandstorm sends it rolling onward.

The Indians in Chiapas are all direct descendants of the Maya-Quichés whose cities now lie in centuries-old ruins at Palenque and elsewhere; yet in present-day Chiapas there are several different tribes, each speaking its own language. It is claimed that these Indians have had for centuries an almost perfect system of radio or of mental telepathy whereby they can communicate with one another across hundreds of miles of space. Its secret is closely guarded by them. Leading scientists who recently have been experimenting upon mental communication between New York and Paris might learn much from these primitive natives of the plains and jungles of Chiapas.

Yucatan has a railroad system which covers the state like a giant daddy-long-legs with its body at Mérida. Thus the *Yucatecos* are brought closely into touch with modern civilization. The pure Maya type, with the slanting forehead and elongated head, is rarely met with except in the remote parts of the state. More usual are the very pretty Maya women and the good-looking men with more than a touch of white blood in them.

The *Yucatecos* are exceptionally attractive, in their pleasing manners as well as in their good looks, their

marked intelligence and their very cleanly appearance. Only in the jungles of the south and in the wild and little known Quintana Roo are the pure-blooded Mayas found. Through four centuries they have resented the coming of the white man, the driving of their race back, and ever farther back, into the jungle; and this resentment still shows in their attitude. But, after all, it is a laudable spirit of pride in their own race and loyalty to those ancestors who built the splendors of Uxmal, Chichen-Itza and the other cities whose ruins today tell of their one-time glory.

There is a gripping beauty about Mexico's mountain and jungle scenery; there is a strange fascination in her mystery ruins; but it is her Indians, with their age-old traditions and their colorful lives, that give a piquant interest, a lingering charm, to this land of delightful contrasts, the luring land that is Beautiful Mexico.

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